DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 479 817 EC 309 751

TITLE	Identification of Gifted Students in Ohio.
INSTITUTION	Ohio State Legislative Office of Education Oversight, Columbus.
PUB DATE	2003-04-00
NOTE	94p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Legislative Office of Education Oversight, 77 South High St., 15th Floor, Columbus, OH 43266-0927. Tel: 614-752-9686; Fax: 614-752-3058; Web site: http://www.loeo.state.oh.us. For full text: http://www.loeo.state.oh.us/reports/PreEleSecPDF/Gifted_Web.pdf.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Ability Identification; *Educational Legislation; *Gifted; *Incidence; School Districts; *State Legislation; *State Standards; Statistical Data
IDENTIFIERS	*Ohio

ABSTRACT

This report provides statistics on numbers of students in Ohio identified as gifted; examines the effect of a 1999 state law standardizing the identification of gifted students; identifies factors that influence the proportion of students that districts identify as gifted; compares the identification of gifted students in Ohio with other states; and raises the issue of how gifted services are defined and funded. Findings indicate that not all districts have implemented the standardized identification process and that factors contributing to variations among school districts in the percentage of students identified include district socio-economic status, screening vs. referral practices, teacher training, and district progress in implementing identification standards. Comparison with other states finds that Ohio is one of 32 states mandating the identification of gifted students and is one of only 4 of these states that do not mandate services. Eleven appendices provide additional information on gifted funding in Ohio, methods of this study, criteria for gifted identification before and after the statewide standards, and additional findings on gifted identification in other states. Appendices also include an identification flow chart, the executive summary of a report providing recommendations concerning gifted education in Ohio, and a list of assessments approved for screening and identification by areas of giftedness. (Contains 39 references.) (DB)

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Identification of Gifted Students in Ohio

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The Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) serves as staff to the Legislative Committee on Education Oversight. Created by the Ohio General Assembly in 1989, the Office evaluates education-related activities funded by the state of Ohio. This LOEO report examines the impact of new gifted identification requirements enacted in June 1999 on the number of students school districts identify as gifted. *Conclusions and recommendations in this report are those of the LOEO staff and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Committee or its members.*

This report is available at LOEO's web site: http://www.loeo.state.oh.us

Summary

Identification of Gifted Students in Ohio

Background

Since 1984, Ohio school districts have been required to *identify* gifted students. However, there has never been a state mandate to provide special *services* to identified students.

State policy regarding the education of gifted students began in 1975 with the first provision of state funding for gifted services to school districts. Since 1984, Ohio school districts have been required to *identify* gifted students. However, there has never been a state mandate to provide special *services* to identified students.

For fiscal year 2003, the General Assembly has appropriated approximately $48 million for gifted education. These funds provide 1,100 gifted units, assist school districts with the identification of gifted students, and support summer programming and research/demonstration projects.

Based on the maximum student-teacher ratios specified in law, the 1,100 gifted units provide enough funding to serve one-fifth of the total identified gifted student population. A $5 million set-aside for the identification of gifted students provides $2.88 for each Ohio public school student.

In 1999, the 123rd General Assembly passed Am. Sub. H.B. 282 to standardize the gifted identification process.

In 1999, the 123rd General Assembly passed Am. Sub. H.B. 282, attempting to standardize the gifted identification process by ensuring that all school districts use similar methods and criteria to identify gifted students. In addition, school districts were required to establish procedures for identifying students from traditionally under-represented groups.

Ohio defines giftedness as "...students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment." Ohio also provides criteria for the identification of students in four main areas:

- Superior cognitive ability;
- Specific academic ability;
- Creative thinking ability; and
- Visual/performing arts ability.

Approximately 13% of Ohio students were identified as gifted as of June 2002.

This Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) report:

- Provides the most up-to-date and available numbers of students identified as gifted;
- Examines the effect of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 on the identification of gifted students;
- Identifies factors that influence the proportion of students that districts identify as gifted;
- Compares the identification of gifted students in Ohio with other states; and
- Raises a policy issue regarding potential changes to Ohio's method of funding gifted services.

Most Ohio school districts identify between 3% and 20% of their students as gifted.

Findings

The number of gifted students in Ohio. As of June 2002, there were approximately 248,000 students in Ohio identified as gifted (13%). There was also a large variance in the percent of students identified as gifted by the majority of school districts (between 3% and 20%).

Impact of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 on gifted identification. There is evidence that not all school districts have completely implemented the requirements of Am. Sub. H.B. 282. Therefore, it is not yet possible to determine the full impact of the provisions of this law on gifted identification practices and the percentage of students identified. Since the law went into effect, however, the overall percentage of students reported as gifted has increased.

The overall percent of students identified as gifted has increased since Am. Sub. H.B. 282 went into effect.

In examining the impact of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 on traditionally under-represented student populations, LOEO found that racial/ethnic minority, disabled, and limited English proficiency students are still under-identified as gifted.

District variation in identifying gifted students. Although Am. Sub. H.B. 282 attempted to standardize the gifted identification process, the use of similar methods and criteria to identify gifted students does not necessarily result in similar outcomes.

Ensuring that all school districts use similar methods and criteria to identify gifted students does not necessarily result in similar outcomes.

LOEO found that the following factors contribute to the wide variance in the percentage of students identified as gifted across Ohio's school districts:

- School district socio-economic status;
- The practice of screening all students in a grade level, rather than referring only a limited number for testing;
- Teacher training in the identification of gifted students; and
- District progress in implementing the new identification requirements of Am. Sub. H.B. 282.

Gifted identification in other states. Ohio's definition and recognized areas of giftedness are similar to those used in other states. In addition, Ohio is one of 32 states that mandate the *identification* of gifted students. Four of these 32 states, however, do not mandate *services*; Ohio is one of them. While Ohio specifies the criteria and many of the methods districts must use when identifying students as gifted, many other states leave those decisions to their local school districts.

Ohio is one of 32 states that mandate the identification of gifted students, but only one of four states that do not *also* mandate services for the students

Policy Issue

Variation in the percentage of students identified as gifted across Ohio school districts remains despite a recent attempt to standardize the process that school districts use to identify students as gifted. Standardizing the *process*, however, does not necessarily standardize the *outcome*.

Ohio does not connect the identification of students as gifted to the educational needs of those students. In other words, Ohio does not limit the number or percentage of students identified to those that require special services.

Instead, Ohio identifies *all* students that meet an "absolute" standard of giftedness that is the same in all school districts. As a result, Ohio school districts identify very different percentages of students as gifted. This approach has implications for future policy and budget deliberations.

For future consideration. Should Ohio decide in the future to mandate services for gifted students, the issue of how gifted services are defined and funded will have to be addressed.

For example, some school districts currently identify 40% or more of their students as gifted. A service mandate for those students could potentially have significant implications for district staff and state and local financial resources.

In a school district that has identified a large portion of its students as gifted, it may be that its regular curriculum offers sufficient challenges to most students. In this case, a state mandate that districts offer services "to meet students' needs" might require that only *some* of the students identified as gifted be offered additional services.

In another school district, the current curriculum may fail to challenge *most* of the students it identifies as gifted. In this case, special services may be necessary for those students. The funding implications are different for these two very different school districts.

There has been the suggestion to switch to or add weighted per-pupil funding for gifted services. If legislators wish to consider weighted per-pupil funding, there should be some investigation of which students, currently identified as gifted, need additional services. Some of these students may already receive the needed challenge in their school's regular curriculum.

Identification of Gifted Students in Ohio

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COMMENTS

Chapter I
Introduction

This Legislative Office of Education Oversight report describes the number of students identified as gifted in Ohio and explains possible reasons for the wide variation in the percentage of students identified across Ohio's school districts.

Background

State policy regarding the education of gifted students began in 1975 with the first provision of state funding for gifted services to school districts. Since 1984, Ohio school districts have been required to *identify* gifted students. However, there has never been a state mandate to provide special *services* to identified students.

State funding for gifted services is provided through "units" allocated to districts to help pay for gifted teachers and coordinators. Historically, state gifted units were awarded to school district applicants that had already committed *local* funds to gifted services. In more recent years, higher priority has been given to school districts with lower property valuations.

Approximately 73% of all school districts *directly* receive unit funding. Most of the remaining school districts, however, may receive gifted services from Educational Service Centers (ESCs), regional service agencies that also receive gifted units.

For fiscal year 2003, the General Assembly has appropriated approximately $48 million for gifted education. These funds provide 1,100 gifted units, assist school districts with the identification of gifted students, and support summer programming for gifted students and research/demonstration projects.

Based on the maximum student-teacher ratios specified in law, the 1,100 gifted units provide enough funding to serve, at most, one-fifth of the total identified gifted student population. For fiscal year 2004, the State Board of Education has proposed an 8.8% increase in unit funding. Appendix A provides additional detail regarding Ohio funding for gifted education.

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Purpose of LOEO Study

In June 1999, the 123rd Ohio General Assembly attempted to standardize the methods and criteria school districts use to identify gifted students. In doing so, Amended Substitute House Bill 282 specified new gifted identification and reporting requirements for school districts.

One of the requirements in Am. Sub. H.B. 282 was that school districts must have gifted identification plans, which describe the strategies, processes, and assessments school districts use to identify gifted students. For school districts that did not have the capacity to develop plans on their own, the Ohio Department of Education

(ODE) developed a "model plan" that could be adapted to individual district's needs.

Two years later, the 124th General Assembly, in Amended Substitute House Bill 94, asked the Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) to:

- Review and analyze the plans adopted by school districts for the identification of gifted students; and
- Issue a report that summarizes the methods school districts are using to identify gifted students and the numbers of gifted students being identified.

In response to this request and legislators' concerns regarding the persistent and large variation in the percentage of students identified as gifted across Ohio school districts, the objectives of this LOEO study are:

1. To provide the most up-to-date and available numbers of students identified as gifted;
2. To examine the effect of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 on the identification of gifted students;
3. To identify factors that influence the proportion of students that districts identify as gifted; and
4. To compare the identification of gifted students in Ohio with other states.

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LOEO Methods

In conducting background research for this study, LOEO discovered that gifted identification plans, as required by Am. Sub. H.B. 282, are not the best source for an explanation of why school districts identify very different percentages of students as gifted.

School district gifted identification plans, by design, are written very broadly and closely resemble one another. Most school district plans follow the model plan created by ODE to ensure they address the requirements put forth in Am. Sub. H.B. 282.

The model plan, however, still leaves much of the gifted identification process to local discretion. District plans, therefore, do not provide all of the detail necessary to determine how practices differ at the local level. To complete this study, LOEO:

- Reviewed the literature related to gifted identification (see Appendix B for a selected bibliography);
- Interviewed 17 national, state, and local experts in the field of gifted identification and education regarding why school districts might identify very different percentages of students as gifted;
- Surveyed all 612 Ohio school districts regarding the number of students they report as gifted to the Education Management Information System (EMIS);
- Surveyed 484 randomly selected school districts regarding their gifted identification practices and the impact of Am. Sub. H.B. 282;

- Examined school district gifted identification plans submitted to ODE;
- Compared the percentage of gifted students reported in EMIS with district identification plans and practices; and
- Reviewed other states' gifted identification practices.

Appendix C provides additional detail regarding each of these study methods, including a demographic breakdown of the survey respondents.

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Gifted Identification in Ohio

Definition of "giftedness"

Although definitions of "giftedness" found in the literature and used by different states share common elements, they are not all the same. Those common elements may be attributed to the existence of a federal definition of giftedness, first provided in 1972. A more recent definition, provided in Exhibit 1, was included in a 1993 U.S. Department of Education report.

Exhibit 1
Federal Definition of Giftedness

"Children and youth with outstanding talent perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.

These children and youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools.

Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata and in all areas of human endeavor."

Source: The U.S. Department of Education's 1993 report, *National Excellence: A case for developing America's talent.*

Ohio's definition of giftedness. In Section 3324.01 of the Ohio Revised Code, Ohio defines giftedness as:

"...students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment."

Ohio also provides criteria for the identification of students in four main areas:

- Superior cognitive ability;
- Specific academic ability;
- Creative thinking ability; and
- Visual/performing arts ability.

Ohio's definition of giftedness closely mirrors the federal definition – with one important exception. Ohio *does not* define "gifted" students as those that "require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools." The federal definition of giftedness might be considered a "relative" definition because it applies only to those students that require special instructional services.

For example, a student may require specialized services in one district but be accommodated by the regular curriculum in another. In this case, he would be identified as gifted in the first district, but not in the second.

Ohio's definition, on the other hand, might be considered "absolute" because it identifies students as gifted if they meet the state-specified criteria, independent of whether the instructional services ordinarily provided by their district already meet their needs.

This is consistent, however, with the fact that Ohio does not mandate that school districts provide services to students identified as gifted to meet their special needs.

History of gifted identification in Ohio

Ohio first addressed the identification of gifted students in 1984. Exhibit 2 provides a timeline that highlights the major changes in gifted identification state policy over the last two decades.

Exhibit 2
Timeline of Gifted Identification Policy in Ohio

1984	The State Board of Education created rules for the identification of gifted students and specified criteria for identification in four areas of giftedness.
1987	The 117th General Assembly mandated the identification of gifted students and required school districts to create written policies regarding gifted identification (Sub. H.B. 231).
1989	The 118th General Assembly required school districts to annually report the numbers of students identified as gifted and students receiving gifted services funded by the state (Am. Sub. H.B. 111).
1999	The 123rd General Assembly established new requirements for the identification and reporting of gifted students (Am. Sub. H.B. 282).
2000	The State Board of Education revised section 3301-51-15 of the Ohio Administrative Code to incorporate the new requirements for gifted identification and reporting found in Am. Sub. H.B. 282.

Changes made by Am. Sub. H.B. 282

As noted, in June 1999, the 123rd General Assembly passed Am. Sub. H.B. 282, which established new requirements for the identification and reporting of gifted students.

One purpose of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 was to *standardize* the gifted identification process by ensuring that all school districts use similar methods and criteria to identify gifted students. Important provisions in Am. Sub. H.B. 282 regarding school district identification of gifted students are listed in Exhibit 3.

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Exhibit 3
Provisions of Amended Substitute House Bill 282
123rd General Assembly

1	A formal definition of "giftedness" for the first time in Ohio law, referring to four main areas of giftedness and specifying academic subject areas for the first time.
2	A requirement that school districts identify gifted students in *grades kindergarten through twelve.*
3	Changes in the criteria for identifying gifted students.
4	A requirement that school districts *submit* gifted identification plans to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE).
5	A requirement that school districts use assessments from an ODE-approved list to screen potentially gifted students and to identify gifted students.
6	A requirement that parental notification and an appeals process be included in school district gifted identification plans.
7	A requirement that school districts include procedures and assessments for screening and identifying traditionally under-represented students in their gifted identification plans.
8	A requirement that school districts submit an annual report to ODE specifying the number of students *screened*, the number *assessed*, and the number *identified* as gifted in each of the four main areas of giftedness.
9	Funding set aside for the *identification* of gifted students.
10	A requirement that school districts create and submit gifted *service* plans to ODE.

Process for identifying gifted students

As noted in Exhibit 3, school districts are now required to report the numbers of students screened, assessed, and identified as gifted. This new reporting requirement expanded upon districts' previous obligation to report only the number of students identified as gifted. The terms *screened, assessed,* and *identified*, as described below, refer to parts of the gifted identification process used in Ohio.

- **Pre-assessment** – this first, optional phase of the gifted identification process ideally involves all students. The purpose of the pre-assessment phase is to gather information (such as referrals, grades, test data, and so on) that will enable school district personnel to create a "pool" of students that require additional screening.

- **Screening** – in the second phase, all of the collected information is examined and students in the screening "pool" are either moved on to the assessment phase or, when no evidence of "giftedness" is found, the student is "screened out" of the pool. As part of the screening phase, school districts may assess students using tests or other ODE-approved instruments for the purpose of screening. Individual school districts set the necessary scores students must obtain to move on to the assessment phase.

- **Assessment** – in the third phase, assessments approved for *identifying* gifted students are administered. The Ohio General Assembly, in Am. Sub. H.B. 282, set the necessary scores students must obtain on these tests to be identified as gifted.

  Some assessments may be used for both the screening and assessment phases. When a school district uses one of these tests, it sets the score that a student must obtain to move on from the screening phase. That score should be lower than the score set by the legislature for identification.

  If a student obtains the necessary score for identification during the screening phase, the student is identified as gifted – no further assessment is required.

- **Identification** – the decision to identify a student as gifted is based on the information obtained during screening and assessment. Students who meet the criteria established by the Ohio General Assembly are identified as gifted. Appendix D provides the criteria used to identify students as gifted both prior to and after Am. Sub. H.B. 282.

For each fiscal year since 1999, the General Assembly has appropriated $5 million to assist school districts with the identification process. These funds are distributed according to school districts' average daily membership (ADM). For FY 2002, the $5 million set-aside provided Ohio's school districts with $2.88 per student. See Appendix A for more detail on funding and Appendix E for a flow chart illustrating the four-part process used to identify gifted students.

State-level implementation of Am. Sub. H.B. 282

In 2000, the State Board of Education revised section 3301-51-15 of the Ohio Administrative Code to incorporate the new requirements for gifted identification and reporting found in Am. Sub. H.B. 282. The State Board also created two *additional* requirements:

- School districts must submit annual reports on the *effectiveness* of the identification of gifted students and the services provided to them; and

- School districts must create a written educational plan (WEP) for each gifted student receiving services.

To help school districts meet all of the requirements of Am. Sub. H.B. 282, ODE developed a technical assistance

manual for the identification of children who are gifted and a guide titled *Model Policies and Plan for the Identification of Children Who Are Gifted.*

As required by Am. Sub. H.B. 282, ODE also developed *Assessment Instruments for the Identification of Children Who Are Gifted,* a list of approved assessments that can be used for screening and identifying gifted children.

Shortly thereafter, ODE contracted with Battelle, a private research firm, for an independent evaluation of how ODE and school districts implemented the gifted identification requirements in Am. Sub. H.B. 282. Particular attention was paid to the management processes used during implementation. Appendix F provides an LOEO summary of the Battelle 2001 report, *Evaluation of the New Requirements for Identification of Gifted Students.*

More recently, in November 2002, ODE released a report regarding recommendations for the future direction of gifted education policy in Ohio. Appendix G contains the executive summary for the report, *Gifted in the 21st Century: A Report of Findings and Recommendations.*

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Report Organization

To assist with future policy and budget deliberations, Chapter II of this report provides the most up-to-date and available numbers of students identified as gifted. Chapter III examines the impact of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 on those numbers. To address legislators' concerns, Chapter IV identifies factors that influence the proportion of students that districts identify as gifted. Chapter V compares the identification of gifted students in Ohio with other states. Finally, Chapter VI summarizes the findings from the preceding chapters and offers a policy issue for future consideration.

Chapter II
The Number of Gifted Students in Ohio

This chapter reports the number and percentage of gifted students across Ohio's school districts as of June 2002.

It is not possible to say what proportion of students Ohio school districts *should* identify as gifted. Many discussions in the literature focus on what percentage of students cannot be served adequately within the regular classroom without special intervention, not on what percentage of students will meet specified criteria.

The most conservative estimate LOEO found in the literature regarding the percentage of students that should be identified as gifted and receive special services was 3% while the most liberal was 20%. Other more mainstream estimates argue that based on a "broad definition" of giftedness, including multiple areas of giftedness, school districts should identify 10% to 15% of their students as gifted.

As of June 2002, approximately 248,000 (13%) of Ohio students were identified as gifted. This information comes from school district reporting to ODE's Education Management Information System (EMIS). June 2002 is the most recent reporting period for gifted data.

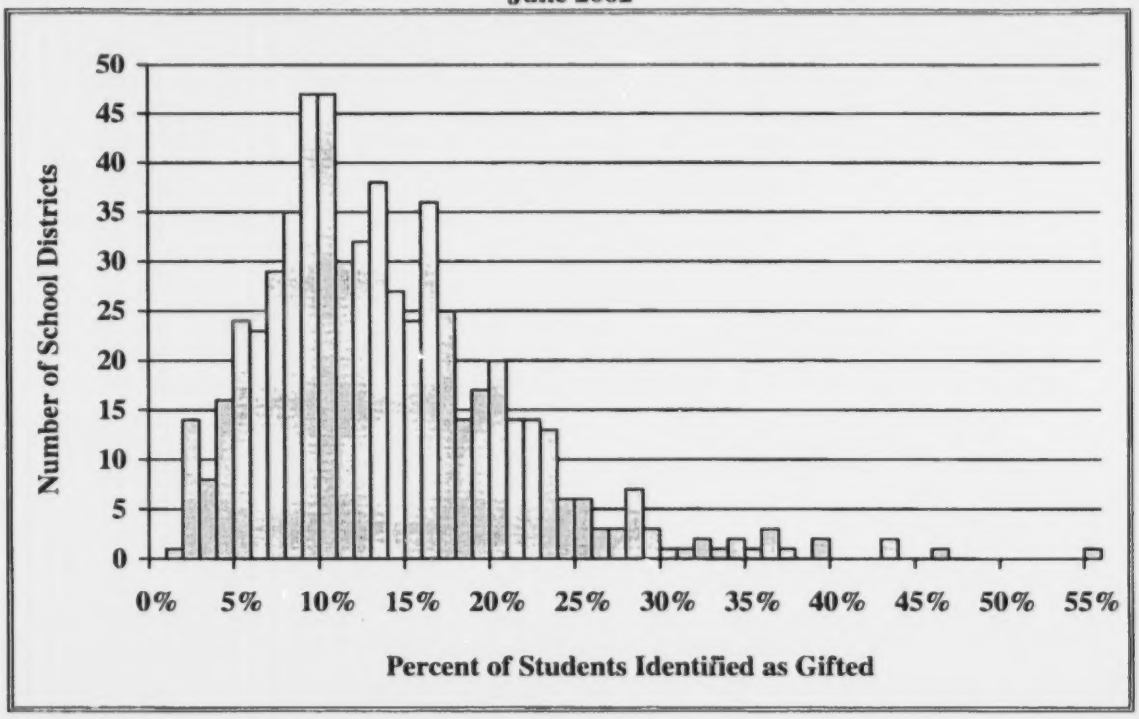
The number provided above is the sum of each school district's *head count* of gifted students. A "head count" includes students who were enrolled in a given school district for any amount of time during the school year. Statewide totals based on this type of data will count some students more than once. For example, when a student transfers from one district to another during the same school year, that student is included in both school districts' head count.

The Ohio Department of Education told LOEO that the number of students duplicated due to transfers is probably small. Once the Statewide Student Identification system is in operation, this duplication will be eliminated. Appendix H provides more detail regarding this and other calculations used for this report.

Variance in the percentage of students identified as gifted

Although the *statewide* percentage of students identified as gifted was 13% as of June 2002, *individual school districts* identified as few as 1% to as many as 55% of their students as gifted. These two extremes, however, do not accurately reflect the percentage of students identified in the *majority* of school districts. Exhibit 4 illustrates the variance in the percentage of students identified as gifted across Ohio's school districts.

Exhibit 4
School District Variance in the Percentage of Students Identified as Gifted
June 2002



Source: Ohio Department of Education, EMIS, final data

Exhibit 4 shows that the variance in the percentage of students identified across the majority of Ohio school districts is, although still noticeably wide, not as wide as the two extremes might indicate. In fact:

- Most school districts (83%) identified **between 3% and 20%** of their students as gifted;
- More than half of all school districts (60%) identified **between 5% and 15%**; and
- About one-third (33%) of all school districts identified **between 10% and 15%**.

Percentage of students identified in each area of giftedness

The percentages shown above reflect students identified in *one or more* of the four main areas of giftedness: superior cognitive ability, specific academic ability, creative thinking ability, and visual/performing arts ability. Students identified in multiple areas are counted only once.

When examining the number of students identified *within each separate area of giftedness*, the largest percentage was within the area of specific academic ability (10%). Exhibit 5 shows the percentage of all Ohio students identified as gifted in each of the four main areas as of June 2002.

Exhibit 5
Statewide Percentage of Students Identified as Gifted
by Area of Giftedness
June 2002

Area of Giftedness	Percent of All Ohio Students	
Superior Cognitive Ability	5%	
Specific Academic Ability*	10%	• Math 5% • Reading/Writing 5% • Science 3% • Social Studies 3%
Creative Thinking Ability	3%	
Visual/Performing Arts Ability	2%	

*The 10% reflects students identified in *one or more* of the four subject areas. The other percents reflect students identified in a given subject area.

Source: Ohio Department of Education, EMIS, final data

Data issues

As mentioned, the numbers and percentages reported in this chapter are based on data submitted by school districts to EMIS. Unfortunately, not every school district submits its gifted data accurately.

Based on findings from the LOEO survey of all of Ohio's 612 school districts, there are a variety of reasons why school districts submit inaccurate gifted data, such as district-level software problems and staff turnover. Compared to other areas in EMIS, reporting gifted data is a very extensive and complex undertaking.

The fundamental reason for the inaccuracies, however, lies in how the data are used. According to school districts surveyed and interviewed by LOEO, because gifted data have not been used by the state for funding or accountability purposes, there has been little incentive to ensure the accuracy of the data submitted.

For the state as a whole, the inaccuracies appear to have a very small effect on the overall number and percentage of students identified as gifted.

For many individual school districts, however, the difference between the numbers they submit to EMIS and their actual numbers of identified gifted students can be quite large. These errors have implications for any future policy or budget decisions regarding gifted education.

Reporting of gifted data by school districts to EMIS, however, appears to be improving. In fact, further improvement can be expected due to another provision of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 that requires ODE to audit each school district's gifted identification numbers at least once every three years. The first of these audits will be completed in Spring 2003.

Data availability. In order to provide the most current data possible, LOEO used "year-end" data reported to

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EMIS for the 2001-2002 school year. School districts began submitting these data in June 2002, but had until November 2002 to finalize their submissions.

Due to the timing of this report, LOEO received preliminary data from ODE at the end of September. These preliminary data were used for many of the analyses described in this report. When the final data became available at the end of November, LOEO recalculated the overall state findings. See Appendix H for a further description of LOEO calculations.

Chapter III
Impact of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 on Gifted Identification

This chapter discusses the changes that have occurred in the identification of gifted students since the passage of Am. Sub. H.B. 282.

As mentioned earlier, in June 1999, the Ohio General Assembly passed Am. Sub. H.B. 282 to establish new requirements for the identification of gifted students. Exhibit 6 highlights the dates and events important to the implementation of Am. Sub. H.B. 282.

Exhibit 6
Timeline of the Implementation of Am. Sub. H.B. 282

August, November 1999	Two statewide meetings conducted by ODE. Draft versions of the technical assistance manual, ODE's approved list of screening and identification assessments, and the model gifted identification plan were shared with attendees.
February 2000	Due date for school districts to submit gifted identification plans to ODE.
March 2000	Final version of the technical assistance manual published.
May 2000	First version of ODE's approved list of assessments, *Assessment Instruments for the Identification of Children Who Are Gifted*, published. The final ODE-approved list of 64 assessments, published in 2001, contains instruments that can be used for screening and identification in each of the four main areas of giftedness including assessments specifically designed for use with traditionally under-represented student populations. During the "transition year," which ended in November 2000, districts could continue administering assessments previously used – whether they were on ODE's approved list or not.
June 2000	Final version of ODE's *Model Policies and Plan for the Identification of Children Who Are Gifted* published. These model policies and plan were created to guide districts' development of their gifted identification plans.
August 2000 – June 2001	First full school year of implementation.
October 2000	In addition to the existing requirement that districts report the number of students identified as gifted, Am. Sub. H.B. 282 required districts to submit gifted data to ODE specifying the number of students screened and assessed in each of the four areas of giftedness. These numbers were first reported in October 2000.
November 2000	Transition year ends. The majority of school district gifted identification plans are approved (554 of 612).
August 2001 – June 2002	Second full school year of implementation.

Am. Sub. H.B. 282 not fully implemented

Ohio school districts first submitted gifted data according to the new reporting requirements at the beginning of the first full year of implementing Am. Sub. H.B. 282. These October 2000 data, therefore, could not possibly show the effects of the new requirements. LOEO chose to examine the gifted data reported in June 2002. These data should reflect *two full school years* of implementation for many districts and are the first opportunity to see how Am. Sub. H.B. 282 has affected gifted identification in Ohio.

Given the following provisions of Am. Sub. H.B. 282, one possible expectation was that the percent of students identified as gifted would *increase*. School districts are now required to:

- Identify gifted students at *all* grade levels. According to ODE, prior to Am. Sub. H.B. 282, most school districts limited the identification of gifted students to grades three through five.

- Identify gifted students in *all* four areas of giftedness. Prior to Am. Sub. H.B. 282, many school districts focused only on the areas of superior cognitive and specific academic ability. In the area of specific academic ability, the law now lists four *subject areas* previously unmentioned in either administrative rule or law. Prior to Am. Sub. H.B. 282, many school districts had focused on only two subject areas, math and reading/writing.

- Incorporate procedures and assessments to better identify students from traditionally under-represented populations.

Another possible expectation was that Am. Sub. H.B. 282 would lead to greater educator awareness of the gifted identification process because more attention would be given to those areas of giftedness that had previously received less attention. Greater parental awareness of gifted identification would also increase because the law required school districts to notify parents about any results, scheduling issues, or placement decisions resulting from the school district's screening and identification procedures.

As of the end of the 2001-2002 school year, however, there is evidence that not all districts have completely implemented the requirements of Am. Sub. H.B. 282. Therefore, it is too soon to determine the *full* impact of the law on the numbers of students identified as gifted.

ODE-contracted study. In August 2001, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) released a study contracted to Battelle regarding how the new gifted identification requirements of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 were being implemented by school districts. The study, begun in Spring 2000, found that many school districts "had not satisfied the new requirements to include all grade levels in their screening, assessment, and identification process for all gifted areas." Reasons school districts gave for the lack of full implementation included:

- The level of priority placed on gifted identification by school districts;

- A shortage of qualified personnel; and

- The amount of time passed since Am. Sub. H.B. 282 went into effect.

LOEO analysis. In May 2002, LOEO asked school districts to describe the status of the implementation of their gifted identification plans. Fifty percent of the 424 respondents reported that their plans were still not fully implemented.

Other indications that school districts have not fully implemented the requirements of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 are seen in the gifted numbers reported by school districts:

- A number of districts are not reporting students identified as gifted at *all grade levels*, particularly in kindergarten and first grade; and
- A number of districts are not reporting students identified as gifted in each area of giftedness, particularly in the areas of creative thinking ability, visual and performing arts ability, and in the specific academic subject areas of science and social studies.

Exhibits 7a and 7b show the percentage of districts reporting zero students as gifted in each grade level and in each area of giftedness as of June 2002.

Exhibit 7a
Percentage of School Districts Reporting
Zero Students as Gifted
June 2002

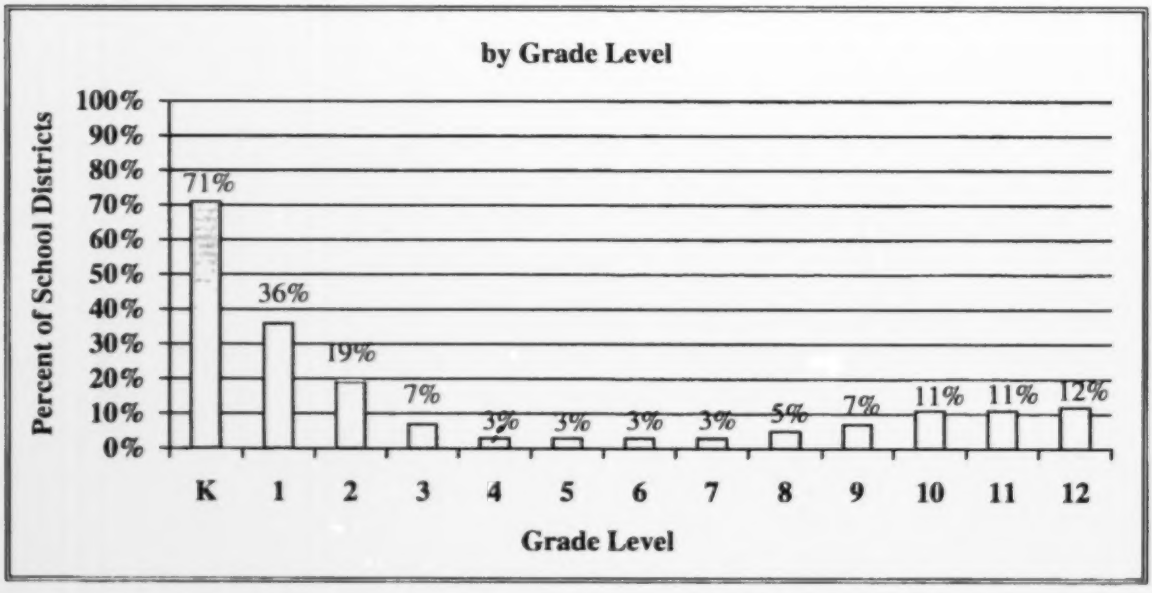
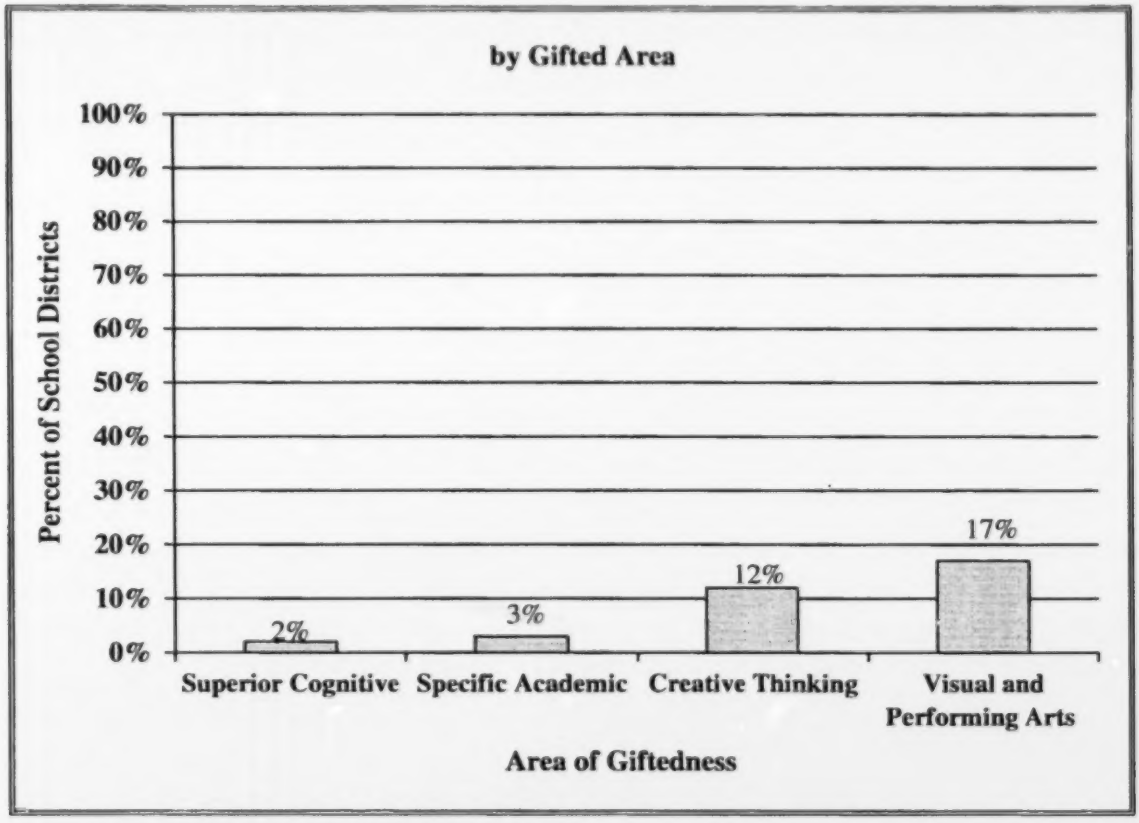


Exhibit 7b
Percentage of School Districts Reporting
Zero Students as Gifted
June 2002



Source: Ohio Department of Education, EMIS, final data

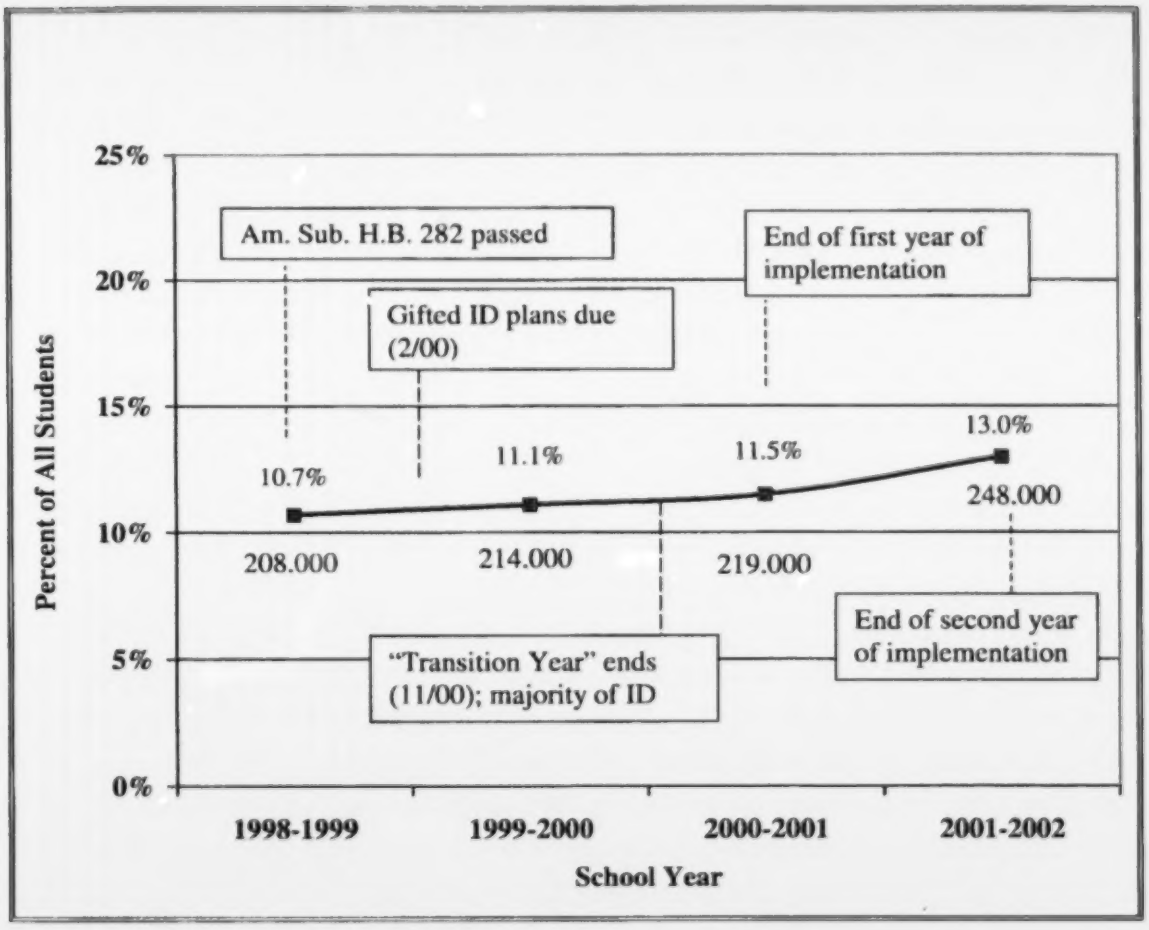
Impact of Am. Sub. H.B. 282

LOEO analyzed trend data to see if there has been any change in the number of students reported as gifted since Am. Sub. H.B. 282 went into effect.

Impact on the overall percentage

The overall percentage increased from 10.7% in June 1999 to 13.0% in June 2002. Exhibit 8 shows the percentage of all students reported as gifted during these four years with some of the major events related to Am. Sub. H.B. 282.

Exhibit 8
Percentage of Students Reported as Gifted



*Numbers of students reported as gifted are approximate.
Source: Ohio Department of Education, EMIS, final data

To provide a context, the percentages of students identified as gifted in Exhibit 6 are presented beginning with the 1998-1999 school year. Although school districts have been reporting gifted data via EMIS since the 1991-1992 school year, 1998-1999 was the first year that *detailed* EMIS data regarding gifted students were available.

Although Am. Sub. H.B. 282 was passed by the General Assembly in June 1999, most school districts did not begin implementing the new requirements until the 2000-2001 school year. Caution must be taken, therefore, in interpreting *when* the "effect" of the new requirements should be seen.

When LOEO asked school districts in Spring 2002 about the impact of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 on the overall number of students identified as gifted, 72% said that they now identify *more* students as gifted.

Impact on the percentage of students identified by grade level

Prior to Am. Sub. H.B. 282, school districts were required to "identify those students enrolled in the district who are gifted children." The law did not specify the grade levels in which students should be identified. Since Am. Sub. H.B. 282 requires school districts to identify gifted students in *grades kindergarten through 12*, they must now have procedures in place to identify students as gifted at each grade level. Once students are identified as gifted, they must be reported as gifted in each subsequent grade level.

LOEO found that with the exception of grades eleven and twelve, the percentage of students reported as gifted increased at every grade level from June 2000 to June 2002. As of June 2002, the greatest percentages of students reported as gifted were in grades three through eight. Exhibit 9 shows the percentage of students reported as gifted within each grade level.

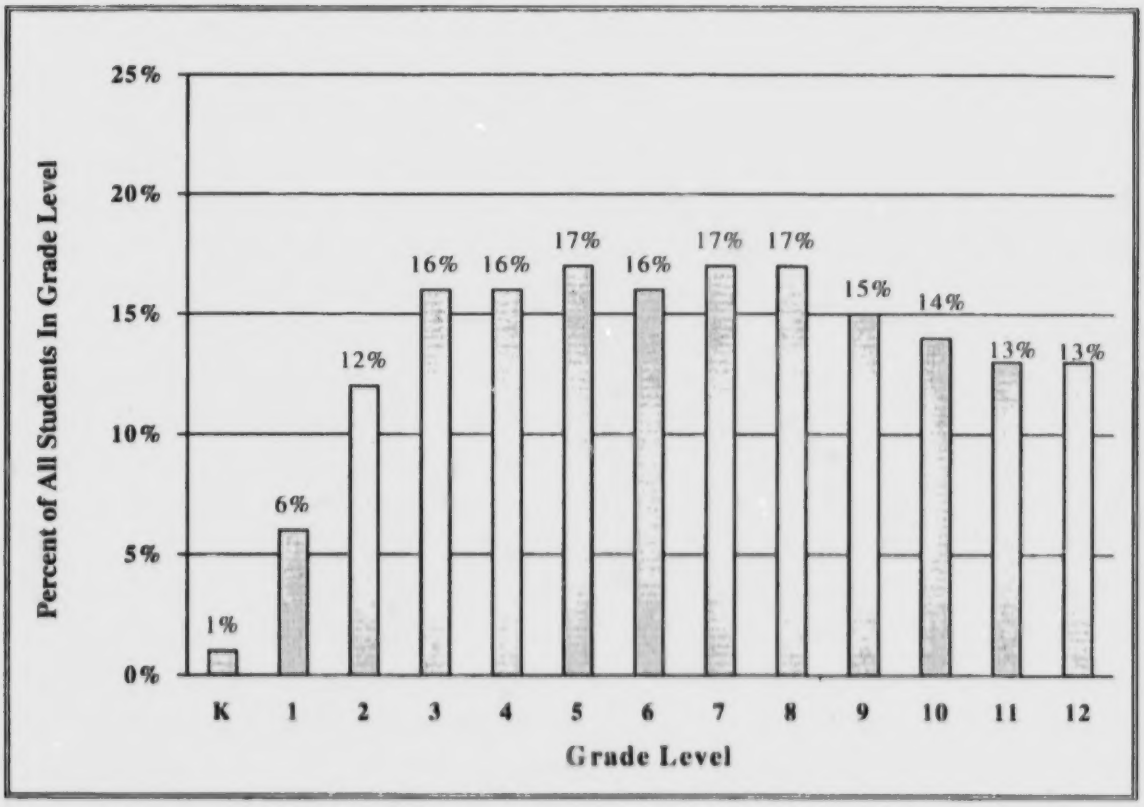
Early primary grades. LOEO expected that the percentage of students reported as gifted would be lower in the early primary grades since subsequent screening and assessment would result in an increasing number of gifted students each year. It appears, however, that the percentage of students reported as gifted in both kindergarten and first grade are *especially* low compared to the other grade levels, 1% and 6% respectively.

According to ODE, these low percentages may be due to some combination of the following:

- School districts' concerns about the validity of assessing and identifying very young students as gifted;
- The challenge of using whole-grade, group assessments with young students;
- The lack of services in most districts at these grade levels, resulting in fewer referrals for testing;
- Less parental awareness of the availability of gifted identification testing; and
- No effort to identify students at the pre-school level, resulting in identification taking place late in the kindergarten year at the earliest.

Despite these obstacles, however, more and more school districts are identifying students in these early grade levels.

Exhibit 9
Percentage of Students Reported as Gifted by Grade Level
June 2002



Source: Ohio Department of Education, EMIS, preliminary data

Secondary grades. The lower percentages of students reported as gifted in the secondary grades (13%-15%) than the middle grades (16%-17%) appear to be inconsistent with Ohio's policy of once identified, always identified. The percentages of students should increase across grade levels as more students are identified.

Even if school districts were no longer actively identifying students in the secondary grades, the percentages of students reported as gifted in each grade level should, at least, remain roughly the same.

There are several possible explanations for this pattern. First, school districts that have chosen to focus or begin their implementation of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 in the late elementary or middle school grade levels will report higher percentages of students in those grade levels. As time passes and those students move into high school, those percentages should increase as well.

Second, this pattern may reflect a data reporting problem. Several school districts told LOEO that since they do not provide special services to gifted students during their high school years, those students are no longer tracked and reported via EMIS as identified gifted students. This misunderstanding of the EMIS reporting requirement affects the percentage of students in those grade levels as well as the overall state percentage of students reported as gifted.

Impact on areas of giftedness

Exhibit 10 shows the percentage of students reported as gifted in each area of giftedness since the 1998-1999 school year. The percentage of students reported as gifted in superior cognitive ability and specific academic ability has increased from June 2000 to June 2002.

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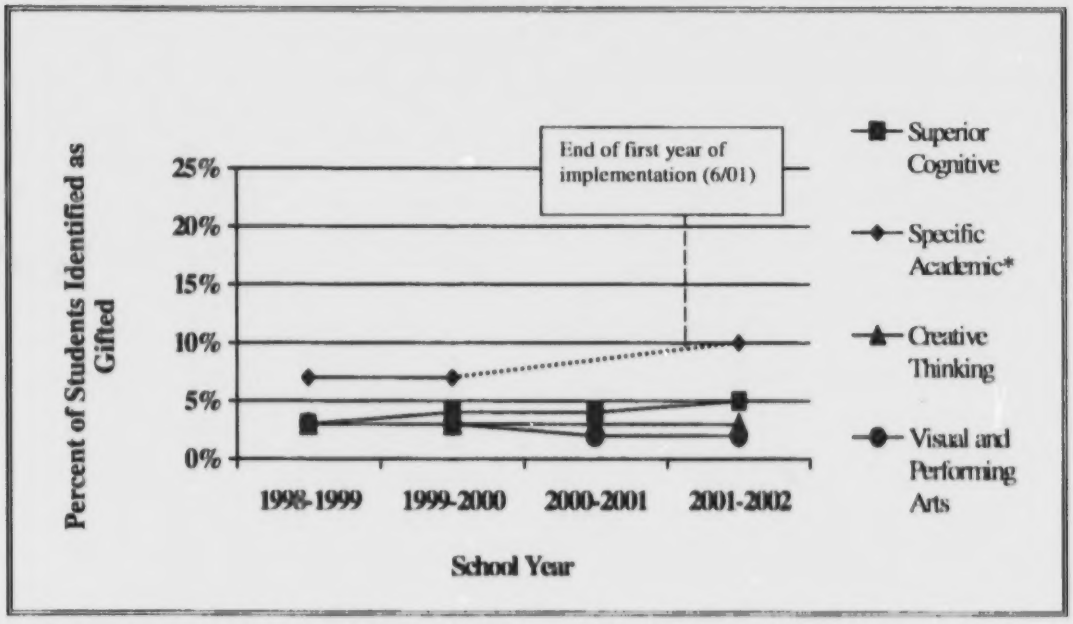
Exhibit 10
Percentage of Students Reported as Gifted by Area of Giftedness



*Data regarding the number of students identified in one or more specific academic subject areas were not available for the 2000-2001 school year.

Source: Ohio Department of Education, EMIS, final data

The increase in these two areas of giftedness may be due in part to changes made to their identification criteria in Am. Sub. H.B. 282. Students can now be identified as gifted with superior cognitive ability by attaining sufficient scores on any one test, regardless of whether it is an intelligence or achievement test, a group test

or an individual test. This change could lead to more students being identified in this area.

Prior to Am. Sub. H.B. 282, students could not be identified as having superior cognitive ability on the basis of an achievement test alone. In addition, any identification made on the basis of a *group* ability test had to also include a student's score on an *individual* achievement test or a group achievement test and documented superior performance.

Similarly, students can now be identified as gifted with specific academic ability by attaining a sufficient score on one test – either a group or an individual achievement test. Prior to Am. Sub. H.B. 282, any identification made on the basis of a *group* test had to also include a student's documented superior performance.

Am. Sub. H.B. 282 also specified the subject areas included under specific academic ability. These areas are: mathematics, reading/writing, science, and social studies. Prior to this law, no subject areas were specified for this area of giftedness and most school districts were identifying students primarily in the subject areas of mathematics and reading/writing.

The percentages of students identified as gifted in creative thinking and visual/performing arts have not shown the same kind of increase.

Experts in gifted education explained that the lack of an increase in the percentage of students identified in creative thinking ability might be due to the philosophical differences surrounding it. Some experts argue that students demonstrate creativity when it is *applied* in a specific subject area, such as math or science. Creativity, they say, cannot be isolated as a separate area of giftedness. Additionally, some experts point out that there are very few, if any, good assessments for the identification of students in this area.

Due to these philosophical differences, some school districts may not be actively seeking to identify students as gifted in the area of creativity.

Gifted experts also said that the lack of change observed in the percentage of students reported as gifted in visual/ performing arts might be due to the unavailability of trained personnel in school districts to assess students in this area. Many school districts, they argued, do not have the time, money, or trained personnel necessary to adequately identify students in the visual/performing arts.

In addition, for both the areas of creativity and visual/performing arts ability, a student must perform well on *two* different assessments, rather than just one as required for the areas of superior cognitive and specific academic ability.

Impact on traditionally under-represented students

Prior to Am. Sub. H.B. 282, no laws or rules specifically addressed minority, disadvantaged, disabled, or limited English proficiency (LEP) students in the gifted identification process. Am. Sub. H.B. 282 required school districts to include procedures and assessments for screening and identifying students from these traditionally under-represented groups.

LOEO has not analyzed past EMIS data on disadvantaged students due to the poor quality of those data caused by limitations in school districts' ability to

collect information regarding students' family financial circumstances. Some of these limitations have been removed for the 2002-2003 school year, which should allow for more accurate data on disadvantagement to be reported in the future.

Exhibit 11 compares the percentage of students reported as gifted in June 2000 and June 2002 for each racial/ethnic group and for disabled and limited English proficiency students.

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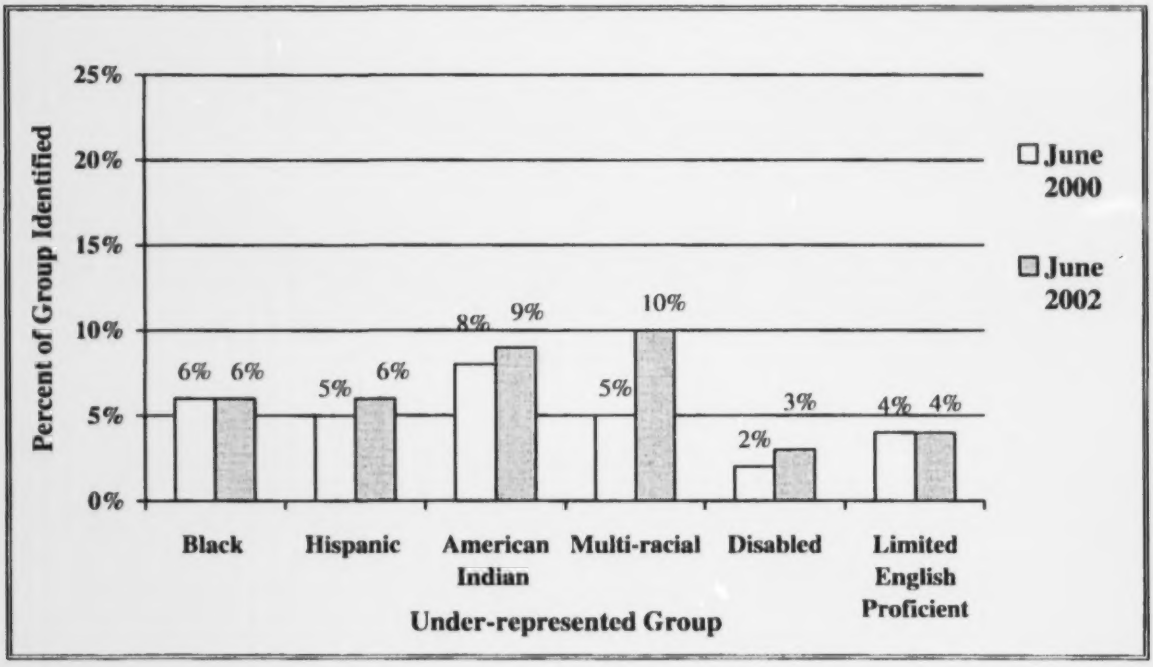
Exhibit 11
Percentage of Each Group Identified as Gifted
June 2000 and June 2002



Source: Ohio Department of Education, EMIS data, final data (1999-2000 school year), preliminary data (2001-2002 school year)

In examining these data, there are increases for four of the six traditionally under-represented groups, yet each group remains under-represented relative to its proportion of the total student enrollment. Students from traditionally under-represented populations, therefore, are still under-identified as gifted.

Exhibit 12 illustrates student groups as percentages of the gifted population and total population. Although students with disabilities are considered to be "under-represented" in the gifted student population, it is not fair to expect students with *all types* of disabilities to be represented among gifted students in the same proportion they represent of the total student population.

When LOEO asked school districts about the impact of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 on the identification of traditionally under-represented students, 72% said that there has been no change in the number of under-represented students identified as gifted.

LOEO conducted many additional analyses of the June 2002 gifted data within each area of giftedness as well as within each ODE comparison group. These groupings allow for comparisons among school districts with shared social and economic conditions. Findings from these analyses can be found in Appendix I.

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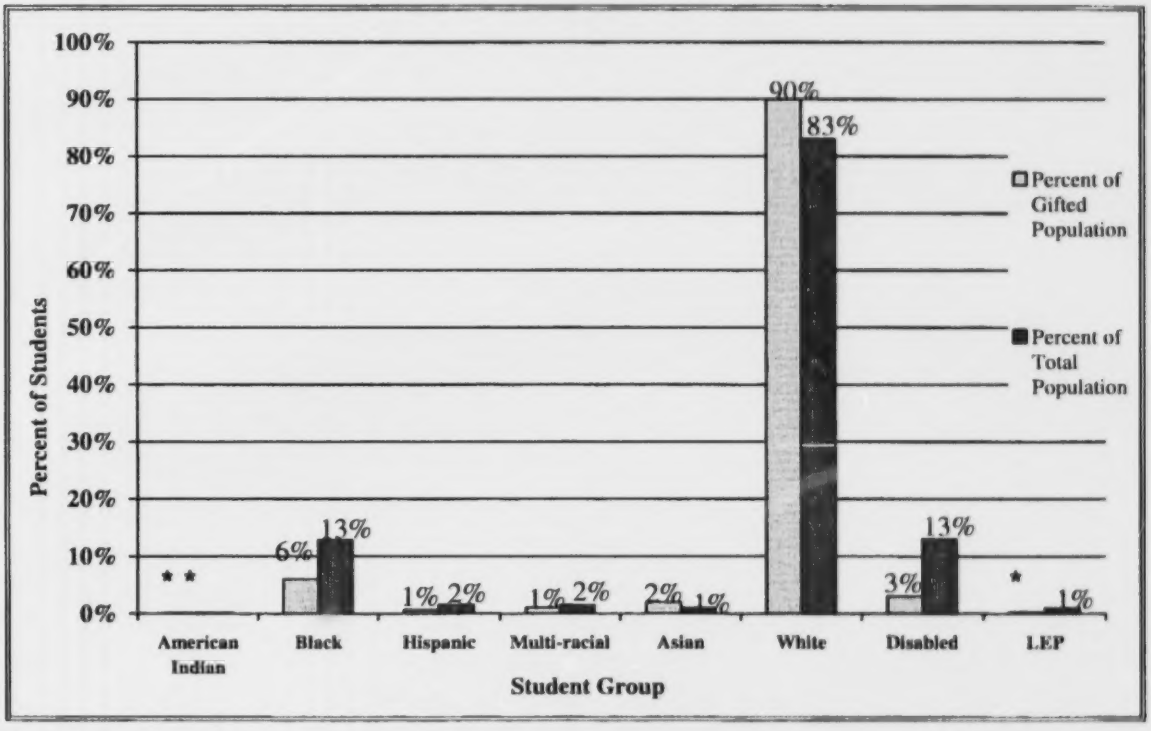
Exhibit 12
Student Groups as Percentages of the Gifted Population and the Total Population
June 2002



*Less than one percent
Source: Ohio Department of Education, EMIS, preliminary data

Summary

There is evidence to suggest that not all school districts have completely implemented the requirements of Am. Sub. H.B. 282. Therefore, it is not yet possible to determine the full impact of the provisions of this law on gifted identification practices and the percentage of students identified. Since the law went into effect, however, the overall percentage of students reported as gifted has increased. This increase is primarily due to larger proportions of students being identified in the areas of

superior cognitive ability and specific academic ability.

Regarding traditionally under-represented populations, LOEO found that the percentage of students reported as gifted in four of these six groups has increased. Each of these groups, however, remains under-represented relative to its percentage of the total student enrollment.

Chapter IV
School District Variation in Identifying Gifted Students

This chapter explores the various factors that contribute to the large variation in the percentage of students identified as gifted across Ohio's school districts.

As mentioned earlier, there is some concern among members of the General Assembly regarding the persistent and large variation in the percentage of students identified as gifted across Ohio school districts. Although Am. Sub. H.B. 282 attempted to standardize the gifted identification process by ensuring that all school districts use similar methods and criteria to identify gifted students, similar processes do not necessarily result in similar outcomes.

To determine what factors could be causing the wide variation in the proportion of students school districts identify as gifted, LOEO first interviewed 17 national, state, and local experts in the field of gifted education. Although the experts interviewed by LOEO did not contradict one another, no single factor was mentioned by every expert. The experts, recommended to LOEO by various stakeholder groups, were also asked to describe the likely impact of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 on gifted identification in Ohio.

Using these possible explanations as a basis for questions, LOEO surveyed a total of 484 randomly selected school districts regarding their gifted education practices (88% responding). LOEO sought to confirm the various factors identified by the experts by analyzing the survey responses in combination with the districts' identification plans and the number of students they reported as gifted.

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Factors Confirmed by LOEO

School district socio-economic status (SES)

The experts identified the socio-economic status (SES) of the school district as a major factor in the percentage of students identified as gifted. According to the experts, high SES school districts have experienced greater expectations from parents regarding the identification of gifted students over a greater period of time. As a result, these school districts are more experienced at identifying students as gifted and gifted identification and services receive a higher level of priority within these districts.

In addition, the experts noted that parents in high SES school districts tend to provide their children with early out-of-school experiences that, when combined with the strong curricula offered in some school districts, lead to greater success in school. Consequently, these students typically perform better on the tests used to identify gifted students, which results in higher percentages of students identified as gifted.

The experts also said that Ohio's required use of nationally normed assessments, which compare students to others from *all types* of school districts (high, medium, and low SES), not just school districts of *similar* social and economic conditions, would cause high SES school districts to identify larger percentages of students as gifted.

Finally, the experts speculated that high SES school districts might have more "discretionary" funds to spend on gifted services than low SES school districts. As a result, the high SES school districts may be more likely to "cast a wider net" or "try harder" to identify students as gifted.

LOEO examined the percentage of students identified as gifted in each of eight ODE comparison groups. Confirming the experts' view, LOEO found that school districts with higher SES identify higher percentages of students as gifted than school districts with lower SES. This finding is "statistically significant," which means that the difference described is very unlikely to occur by chance alone. Exhibit 13 displays the average percent of students identified as gifted within each ODE comparison group.

Exhibit 13
Percentage of Students Identified by School District Socio-economic Status
June 2002

ODE Comparison Group (N = Number of districts)	Total Number of Students Identified as Gifted	Average Percent of Students Identified as Gifted
Large City, Avg. SES, High Poverty N = 14	23,843	6%
Small, Rural, High Poverty N = 78	13,759	10%
Small City, Low SES, High Poverty N = 67	17,925	10%
Small, Rural, Low Poverty N = 157	23,359	12%
Urban, Avg. SES, Avg. Poverty N = 44	25,553	11%
Small Town, Rural, Avg. SES, Avg. Poverty N = 123	32,488	13%
Statewide* N = 612	**248,030**	**13%**
Urban/Suburban, Above Avg. SES, Below Avg. Poverty N = 89	70,680	18%
Urban/Suburban, High SES, Very Low Poverty N = 35	40,357	26%

*Statewide total includes gifted students from the island school districts, College Corner Local, and Monroe Local.
Source: Ohio Department of Education, EMIS, final data

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Whole-grade screening assessments

The practice of assessing whole-grade levels of students as part of a school district's gifted screening process is not a state requirement. The alternative is to rely on the testing of a limited number of students brought forward through a referral process. According to the experts, however, school districts that use whole-grade assessments identify larger percentages of students as gifted because fewer students "fall through the cracks."

This statement was confirmed by LOEO's survey of school districts. LOEO's statistically significant findings include:

- Districts that use whole-grade assessments identify higher percentages of students as gifted (14%) than districts that *do not* use whole-grade assessments (10%).

- Districts that use whole-grade assessment in the area of *visual/performing arts* identify a higher percentage of students as gifted in that area (4%) than districts that *do not* use whole-grade assessment (2%).

- Districts that use whole-grade assessment in four or more grade levels identify higher percentages of students as gifted in the area of *superior cognitive ability* (7%) than districts that use whole-grade assessment in three or fewer grade levels (5%). The same is true for the area of *specific academic ability* (13% vs. 9%).

Although the numbers of survey respondents within each ODE comparison group were too small for statistical tests, suburban school districts were the most likely to use whole-grade assessment in *four or more grade levels*. Large city school districts were the least likely. The vast majority of school districts in *all* comparison groups, however, incorporate some level of whole-grade assessment in their gifted screening practices.

Training teachers to identify gifted students

According to the experts, teachers must receive professional development that addresses the identification of gifted students. Without training, many students may not be identified as gifted because "giftedness" does not necessarily coincide with the perception of a "successful" student – a student that is well-behaved and high achieving.

LOEO survey results found that in school districts where at least half or more of the teachers received training, a higher proportion of students (18%) were identified as gifted than in districts where less than half of the teachers received training (13%). This difference is statistically significant.

LOEO found no pattern to indicate that the socio-economic status of the school district is related to the proportion of teachers that received professional development specific to the identification of gifted students.

Progress in the implementation of Am. Sub. H.B. 282

While the experts did not specifically relate the extent to which school districts are implementing the requirements of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 to the large variation in the percentage of students identified as gifted, those familiar with Ohio's gifted identification policy indicated that Am. Sub H.B. 282 will have an impact on the number of students identified.

Specifically, the experts said Am. Sub. H.B. 282 should result in an increased awareness of gifted education and, therefore, an increase in the number of students identified as gifted.

By specifying all four areas of giftedness in law for the first time, Am. Sub. H.B. 282 may cause some school districts to pay greater attention to those areas of giftedness that had previously received less attention. As noted, prior to Am. Sub. H.B. 282, many school districts focused primarily on the areas of superior cognitive ability and the specific academic subject areas of math and reading/writing.

Increased awareness of gifted identification may also result from the provision in Am. Sub. H.B. 282 that requires school districts to notify parents about any results, scheduling issues, or placement decisions resulting from the school district's screening and identification procedures.

The data suggest, however, that the requirements of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 have not been fully implemented in all of Ohio's school districts and may contribute, in part, to the variance in the percentage of students identified as gifted.

In examining the numbers of students school districts identified as gifted, LOEO found that some school districts do not report gifted students in all grade levels or in all areas of giftedness (see Exhibit 7 in Chapter III). These data indicate that some school districts may not actively seek out gifted students in every grade level or area of giftedness.

As one would expect, this affects the overall percentage of students these school districts identify as gifted. Specifically:

- The more *grade levels* in which school districts report gifted students, the higher the overall percentage of students they identify as gifted.

- The more *areas of giftedness* in which school districts report gifted students, the higher the overall percentage of students they identify as gifted.

- School districts that identify a higher percentage of racial/ethnic minority students also identify an overall higher percentage of students as gifted.

Each of these findings is statistically significant.

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Factors Not Supported

Employing a district-level gifted coordinator

The presence of a gifted coordinator in a school district, or lack thereof, was identified by the experts as possibly contributing to the variance in the percentage of students identified as gifted across school districts. They contend if a school district employs its own gifted coordinator, greater resources and expertise are dedicated to identifying and serving students. As a result, more students may be identified as gifted.

LOEO compared the percentage of students identified as gifted for school districts that employ their own gifted coordinator to school districts that rely on a gifted coordinator serving a number of districts, through an Educational Service Center (ESC) or a consortium of districts. LOEO found no statistically significant difference in the percent of students identified as gifted between school districts employing a gifted coordinator (15%) and districts that rely on the services of a gifted coordinator through an ESC or consortium (14%).

The numbers of survey respondents within each ODE comparison group were too small for statistical tests. However, small, rural school districts with both low and high poverty were *least likely* to employ their own gifted coordinator, while large city school districts with average SES and high poverty and urban school districts with average SES and average poverty were *most likely* to employ their own gifted coordinator.

Broader student referral process

The experts speculated that school districts that permit a broader spectrum of individuals to refer students for gifted screening and identification might identify a higher percentage of students as gifted.

LOEO asked school districts to indicate all of the various types of individuals from whom they accept referrals, such as teachers, other staff, parents, students (self-referrals), students (peer-referrals), and community members.

LOEO compared the percentage of students identified from school districts that include community members and student referrals to districts that do not include these individuals. LOEO found no statistically significant difference between these groups (14% vs. 15%).

What is not known, however, is how *actively* school districts pursue referrals from any source. It is therefore unknown whether such efforts make a difference in the number of students identified.

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Factors Lacking Available Data

Type of test

Individual- vs. group-administered tests. The experts agree that tests administered to students on an individual basis are more accurate in identifying giftedness than tests given to groups of students. Group-administered tests rely more heavily on a student's reading skills and may be more likely to falsely identify a student as gifted.

Given the cost associated with administering individual tests, however, many school districts choose tests that can be administered to groups of students. This is particularly true of districts that choose to assess whole grade levels of students. Group tests, therefore, may identify larger percentages of students as gifted due to the fact that they are more likely to be used with larger numbers of students.

Achievement vs. ability tests. The experts interviewed for this study were concerned with the appropriateness of the tests used to identify students, in particular, the use of "achievement tests" within the area of *superior cognitive ability*. Some experts argued that the use of achievement rather than ability tests could "inflate" the percentage of students identified as gifted.

Other experts argue that the results of both types of assessments are highly correlated and either is appropriate for identification. Achievement tests measure what a child has learned in school, whereas ability tests assess a child's abilities in abstract thinking and reasoning.

Another issue regarding test appropriateness is whether or not a test is well suited for a school district's student population. School districts are required to select assessments appropriate for their *under-represented* student populations. However, there is no similar requirement of districts with high SES populations to choose tests more reflective of their populations.

LOEO attempted to examine these assessment-related factors and how they might affect the percentage of students identified as gifted. Most school districts, however, indicate in their identification plans that they use a combination of assessments to identify students. Since it is not possible to determine what proportion of students are identified using a specific assessment, LOEO could not conclude if the nature of the tests used affect the percentage of students identified as gifted.

However, LOEO *was* able to create a database of all the assessment instruments used by school districts for screening and identifying students. Appendix J contains an inventory of ODE's approved assessment instruments and the number of districts using each.

Additional information used during the pre-assessment phase

The experts hypothesized that school districts that use additional sources of information, beyond grades and test scores, during the pre-assessment phase may identify a higher percentage of students as gifted. Some of the additional sources of information include progress reports, portfolios, observations, auditions, and interviews.

LOEO collected the additional sources of information used by school districts for each area of giftedness. However, due to the myriad of combinations that school districts use, there was no way to determine which, if any, of the additional sources of information resulted in the identification of a higher percentage of students as gifted.

Role of administrative and parental support

According to the experts, the priority of gifted education within a district can determine the extent to which students are identified. If the administration and parents support gifted education, the school district is more likely to actively screen and identify students. As a result of this support, the school district may be more likely to provide professional development opportunities to teachers and services to students.

LOEO's survey was unable to adequately gauge the level of administrative and parental support present in school districts and the extent to which this support relates to the proportion of students identified as gifted.

Summary

Although Am. Sub. H.B. 282 attempted to standardize the gifted identification process by ensuring that all school districts use similar methods and criteria to identify gifted students, similar processes do not necessarily result in similar outcomes.

LOEO found that the following factors may contribute to the wide variance in the percentage of students identified as gifted across Ohio's school districts:

- School district socio-economic status;
- The use of whole-grade screening assessments;
- Teacher training in the identification of gifted students; and
- District progress in implementing the new identification requirements of Am. Sub. H.B. 282.

Chapter V
Gifted Identification in Other States

This chapter compares Ohio's gifted identification policy with that of the other 49 states.

Due to the lack of a federal mandate regarding the identification of gifted students, states that choose to establish gifted identification policies are free to shape those policies in any number of ways. This results in 50 very different state policies.

Definition of giftedness

Ohio's definition of giftedness is somewhat consistent with definitions used in other states. However, 33 of the 48 states that have an official definition specify that gifted students need "special intervention." Ohio's definition does not specify the need for special services.

The areas of giftedness recognized in Ohio are consistent with those found in other states as well. Ohio recognizes four areas of giftedness:

- Superior cognitive ability;
- Specific academic ability;
- Creative thinking ability; and
- Visual/performing arts ability.

Forty-two other states recognize one or more of these areas of giftedness.

Gifted identification

Thirty-two states, including Ohio, mandate the identification of gifted students. Four of these 32 states, however, do not mandate services for gifted students; Ohio is one of them.

Compared to the other states that mandate gifted identification, Ohio has a more standardized approach regarding *how* students are to be identified as gifted. Furthermore, all students who meet the state-specified criteria are to be identified as gifted. In contrast, other states leave the methods and/or criteria for identifying gifted students as a local-level decision.

Under-represented students. Ohio is one of 27 states that have laws or rules that specify the need to consider students from traditionally under-represented populations during the gifted identification process. Five additional states insist that gifted identification procedures and assessments be non-discriminatory.

In most of these states, the assessments that are used take into consideration the unique needs and differences of under-represented students (e.g., linguistic/cultural barriers, learning disabilities, low socio-economic status, etc.). Ohio requires that schools districts include procedures and assessments for the screening and assessment of minority and disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency.

Use of multiple criteria. Nearly two-thirds of the states, including Ohio, have laws or rules that specify that multiple criteria must be used during the overall

gifted identification process. Ohio allows its school districts to use information sources such as student work portfolios, grades, and observation during the pre-assessment phase. During Ohio's identification phase, however, the results of *one* assessment determine whether a student is identified as gifted in the areas of superior cognitive ability or specific academic ability (see Appendix D for specific criteria).

Assessments. Ohio has an official list of assessments from which school districts must choose to test their students for giftedness. Only one other state has a required list of assessments. Several states have a recommended list of assessments and/or guidelines for selecting assessments, but these are suggestions only, not requirements.

Percentage of gifted students

The percentage of students identified as gifted varies for each state, ranging from 2% to 37%. Exhibit 14 shows the number of states falling under each percentage range of gifted students.

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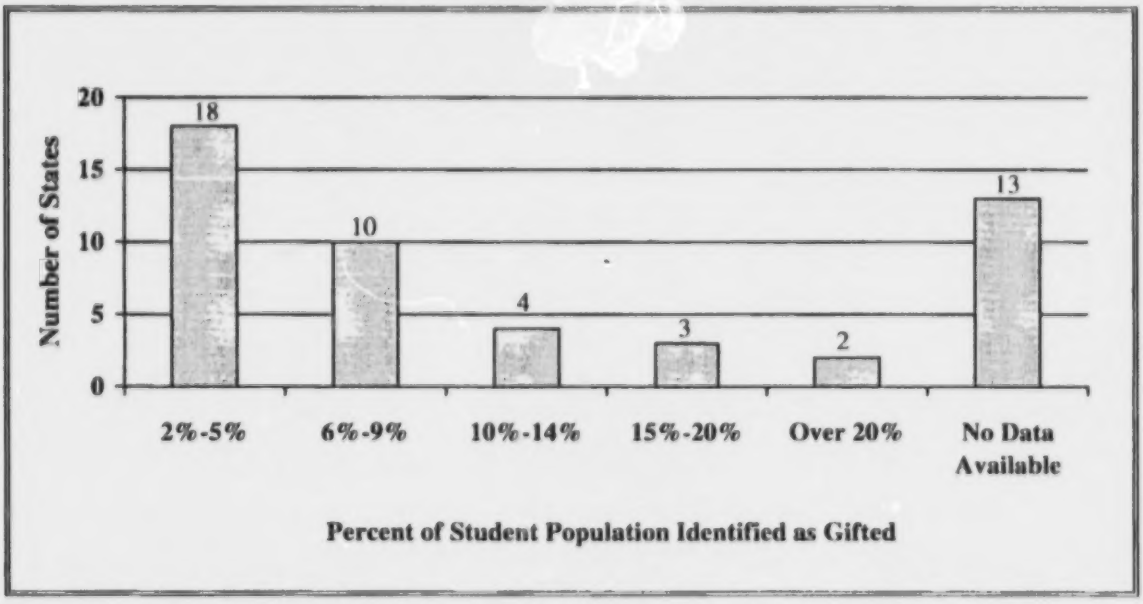
Exhibit 14
Percentage of Gifted Students in All 50 States*



*Data estimates for each state come from either the 2000-2001 school year or the 2001-2002 school year.
Source: Department of Education officials in all 50 states

As Exhibit 14 shows, 18 states identify between 2% and 5% of their student population as gifted. Four states, including Ohio, identify between 10% and 14% of their students as gifted. Statewide percentages of students identified as gifted, however, are heavily influenced by state identification policies, including how many areas of giftedness each recognizes, and the different gifted funding mechanisms

employed by the different states. Comparisons among states, therefore, are very difficult.

Appendix K provides greater detail regarding LOEO's analysis of gifted identification across all 50 states.

Gifted Funding

Gifted funding methods and amounts vary considerably for each state. As mentioned earlier, Ohio currently provides funding for gifted services through units. Two other states use a funding method similar to that used in Ohio. Eleven states provide no funding for gifted services. Another eleven states fund gifted services for only a set percentage of the average daily membership (ADM) or total student enrollment. Other funding methods include weighted per-pupil funding and block grants, which include funding for gifted as well as other areas of education.

Ohio is the *only* state that allocates funding ($5 million) specifically for gifted *identification*.

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Summary

Ohio's definition and recognized areas of giftedness are similar to those used in other states. In addition, Ohio is one of 32 states that mandate the *identification* of gifted students. Four of these 32 states, however, do not mandate *services*; Ohio is one them. While Ohio specifies the criteria and many of the methods districts must use when identifying students as gifted, many other states leave those decisions to their local school districts.

Chapter VI
Summary and Policy Issue

This final chapter summarizes LOEO's findings and raises a policy issue regarding Ohio's approach to the identification of gifted students.

Summary

The number of gifted students in Ohio

As of June 2002, the percentage of all students identified as gifted was approximately 13%. While there was an extremely wide range in the percentage of students that individual school districts identified as gifted (1% to 55%), most school districts (83%) reported between 3% and 20%.

When examining the number of students identified within each area of giftedness, the largest percentage of students (10%) was identified within the area of specific academic ability.

Impact of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 on gifted identification

There is evidence that not all school districts have completely implemented the requirements of Am. Sub. H.B. 282. Therefore, it is not yet possible to determine the full impact of the provisions of this law on gifted identification practices and the percentage of students identified.

Since the law went into effect, however, the overall percentage of students reported as gifted has increased. This increase is primarily due to larger proportions of students being identified in the areas of superior cognitive ability and specific academic ability.

Regarding traditionally under-represented populations, LOEO found that the percentage of students reported as gifted in four of these six groups has increased. Each of these groups, however, remains under-represented relative to its percentage of the total student enrollment.

District variation in identifying gifted students

Although Am. Sub. H.B. 282 attempted to standardize the gifted identification process by ensuring that all school districts use similar methods and criteria to identify gifted students, similar processes do not necessarily result in similar outcomes.

LOEO found that the following factors contribute to the wide variance in the percentage of students identified as gifted across Ohio's school districts:

- School district socio-economic status;
- The use of whole-grade screening assessments;
- Teacher training in the identification of gifted students; and
- District progress in implementing the new identification requirements of Am. Sub. H.B. 282.

Gifted identification in other states

Ohio's definition and recognized areas of giftedness are similar to those used in other states. In addition, Ohio is one of 32 states that mandate the *identification* of gifted students. Four of these 32 states, however, do not mandate *services*; Ohio is one them. While Ohio specifies the criteria and many of the methods districts must use when identifying students as gifted, many other states leave those decisions to their local school districts.

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Policy Issue

Legislators are concerned about the persistent and large variation in the percentage of students identified as gifted across Ohio school districts. This variation remains despite a recent attempt to standardize the process that school districts use to identify students as gifted. Standardizing the *process*, however, does not necessarily standardize the *outcome*.

Ohio has one of the most standardized systems for identifying gifted students in the country, directing not only the methods for gifted identification but also the assessments and criteria that districts will use to identify gifted students. Ohio's approach, however, works to sustain some level of variance in the percentage of students identified as gifted.

Ohio does not connect the identification of students as gifted to the educational needs of those students. Specifically:

- Ohio does not define a "gifted" student as a student who requires special intervention; and

- Ohio neither requires that districts provide services for gifted students nor permits school districts to limit the number of students they identify.

By not connecting the identification of a gifted student with the provision of services to that student, Ohio has chosen not to limit the number or percentage of students identified to those that *should* be served based on the students' educational needs.

Instead, Ohio identifies *all* students that meet an absolute standard of giftedness that is the same in all school districts. As a result, Ohio school districts identify very different percentages of students as gifted.

In effect, gifted identification policy reflects one of two philosophical positions regarding "giftedness." Either:

- Giftedness is an "absolute" condition, which students have independent of the performance of other students in their immediate surroundings or the educational services they are receiving; or

- Giftedness is a "relative" condition, distinguishing those students who are performing considerably better than other students in their immediate surroundings and need special instructional services beyond those provided to the other students.

Ohio's definition of giftedness does speak to "students who perform...at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment." Ohio's policy, however, only compares students to national standards, as measured by obtaining a certain score above the average on nationally normed tests. In this way, it takes into account students of the same age and years of schooling, but not students in the same environment.

In other words, an Ohio student is compared to students nationally, not to other students in the immediate surroundings of his particular school. Ohio, therefore, considers giftedness to be an "absolute" condition (obtaining a certain score above the average on a national test), not a "relative" one (considering whether the student's needs are being met through the regular instruction of that school).

By not connecting the definition of giftedness to the need for special services, it is inevitable that districts with different socio-economic conditions would identify different proportions of their students as gifted when using the same absolute standard. Both the "absolute" and "relative" approaches have advantages and disadvantages. However, both also have different implications for future policy and budget deliberations.

For future consideration. Should Ohio choose in the future to mandate services for gifted students, the issue of how gifted services are defined and funded will have to be addressed.

For example, some school districts currently identify 40% or more of their students as gifted. A service mandate for those students could potentially have significant implications for district staff and state and local financial resources.

In a school district that has identified a large portion of its students as gifted, it may be that its regular curriculum offers sufficient challenges to most students. In this case, a state mandate that districts offer services "to meet students' needs" might require that only *some* of the students identified as gifted be offered additional services.

In another school district, the current curriculum may fail to challenge *most* of the students it identifies as gifted. In this case, special services may be necessary for those students. The funding implications are different for these two very different school districts.

There has been the suggestion to switch to or add weighted per-pupil funding for gifted services. If legislators wish to consider weighted per-pupil funding, there should be some investigation of which students, currently identified as gifted, need additional services. Some of these students may already receive the needed challenge in their school's regular curriculum.

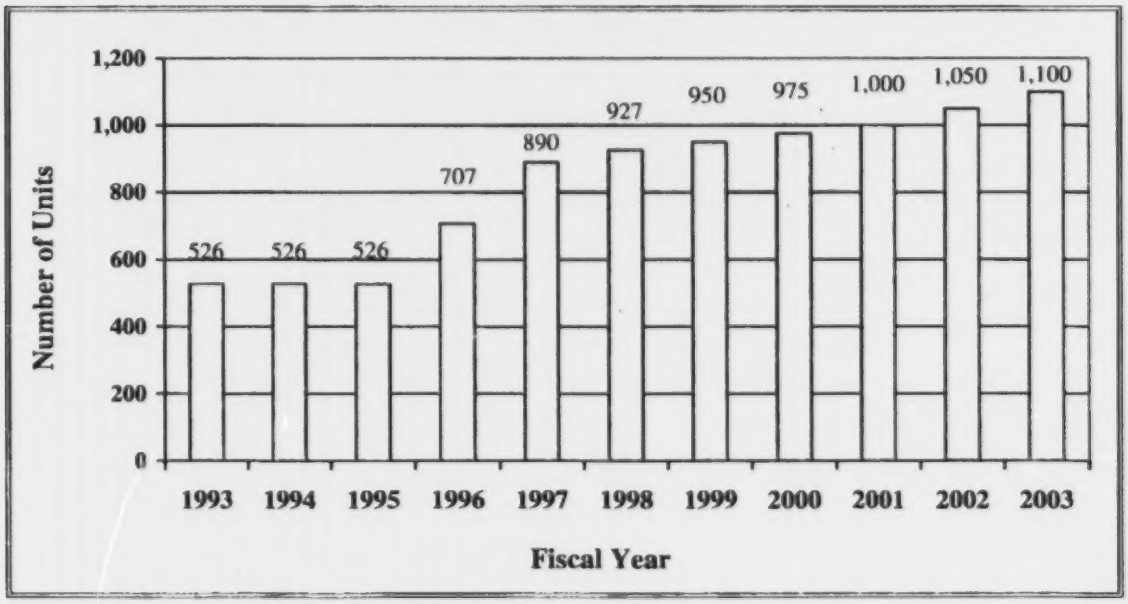
APPENDICES

Appendix A
Gifted Funding in Ohio

Although Am. Sub. H.B. 282 requires school districts to create and submit a gifted service plan, it does not require them to *provide* services to students identified as gifted. There is state funding available, however, for districts that wish to provide services to their gifted students. State funding for gifted services is provided through "units" allocated to districts to help pay for gifted teachers and coordinators. Historically, state gifted units were awarded to school district applicants that had already committed local funds to gifted services. In more recent years, however, higher priority has been given to school districts with lower property valuations.

The first appropriation of unit funding for gifted services occurred in 1975. Although there were no state rules or laws regarding gifted identification at that time, 8.6 units were funded. Since then, the number of units awarded to school districts has steadily increased almost every year. The following chart shows the increase in the number of gifted teacher and coordinator units over the last ten years.

Number of Gifted Teacher and Coordinator Units Appropriated
FY 1993 through FY 2003



Source: Office for Exceptional Children, Ohio Department of Education

In fiscal year 2002, each gifted teacher and coordinator unit consisted of:

- The annual salary the gifted teacher/coordinator would receive if paid under the state's minimum teacher salary schedule (based on level of experience);
- An amount for fringe benefits equal to 15% of the salary allowance;
- A basic unit allowance of $2,678; and
- A supplemental unit allowance, the amount of which partially depends on the district's state share percentage of base-cost funding. (For FY 2001, districts received a per unit supplemental allowance of $2,625.50 plus the district's state share percentage multiplied by $5,550 per unit.)

Units to fund gifted teachers may be awarded to districts (or a consortium of districts) on the basis of an average daily membership (ADM) of 2,000 students. Districts with an ADM of less than 2,000 can get unit funding for one full-time gifted teacher. One gifted teacher can provide instruction and support services to a maximum of 60 gifted students or 20 full-time equivalent gifted students, whichever is less.

For gifted coordinators, units may be approved to districts on the basis of an ADM of 5,000 students. One full coordinator unit may be allocated to districts with fewer than 5,000 students.

For the 2001–2002 school year, there were 1,050 units available for gifted services; 1,046.5 units (280.2 coordinator and 766.3 teacher) were allocated. At the maximum of 60 students per teacher unit, at most, only one-fifth of all public school students identified as gifted can be served using state funding. To serve additional students, or to provide services beyond those afforded with the gifted units, school districts must use local or other sources of funding.

For the 2001-2002 school year, the 1,046.5 units were allocated to:

- 236 out of 371 (64%) local school districts;
- 180 out of 193 (93%) city school districts;
- 34 out of 49 (80%) exempted village school districts; and
- 58 out of 60 (97%) Educational Service Centers (ESCs).

ESCs primarily serve local school districts. School districts without their own gifted units may receive gifted services from an ESC. The number of units awarded to each school district or ESC varies, ranging from a high of 30.0 units to a low of .02 units.

The table below shows the distribution of gifted units among school districts grouped by ODE comparison group.

Gifted Units by ODE Comparison Group
Fiscal Year 2002

ODE Comparison Group	Percent of Gifted Units Allocated to Group	Percent of State ADM Represented by Group
Small, Rural, High Poverty	5.5%	6.9%
Small, Rural, Low Poverty	5.8%	10.8%
Small Town, Rural, Avg. SES, Avg. Poverty	12.3%	13.7%
Small City, Low SES, High Poverty	9.0%	9.1%
Urban, Avg. SES, Avg. Poverty	10.1%	11.1%
Large City, Avg. SES, High Poverty	12.1%	18.8%
Urban/Suburban, Above Avg. SES, Below Avg. Poverty	19.0%	20.8%
Urban/Suburban, High SES, Very Low Poverty	6.1%	8.6%
Total	**79.8%***	**99.8%****

Source: Office for Exceptional Children, Ohio Department of Education
* Does not include gifted units allocated to Educational Service Centers.
**Island school districts, College Corner Local, and Monroe Local not included.

The next table shows the amount of state funding appropriated for gifted education from FY 2000 to FY 2003. For each of these years, $5,000,000 was set aside for the identification of gifted students. These identification funds are distributed according to school districts' average daily membership (ADM). For FY 2002, the $5 million set-aside provided Ohio's school districts with $2.88 per student that could be used for the following purposes:

- Testing materials for the identification of gifted students;
- Services to score assessments used for gifted identification;
- Contracting services needed for screening and identification; and
- Staff development.

The gifted education line item for each of these years also includes $1,000,000 for the Summer Honors Institute for incoming sophomore and junior high school students, $600,000 for research and demonstration projects, and $70,000 for the Ohio Summer School for the Gifted (Martin Essex Program).

State Funding for Gifted Education

Fiscal Year	Funding Amount	Units
2000	$41,923,505	975
2001	$44,060,601	1,000
2002	$45,930,131	1,050
2003	$47,983,321	1,100

Source: Office for Exceptional Children, Ohio Department of Education

Appendix B
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Appendix C
LOEO Study Methods

This appendix provides additional information on the study methods used by the Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) to complete this report.

Literature review

LOEO reviewed over 40 documents dealing with issues related to gifted identification. These documents included journal articles, books, websites, reports, and newspaper articles. See Appendix B for the specific sources used.

Expert interviews

In order to find out why there is variation in the percentage of students identified as gifted across the state, LOEO interviewed 17 national, state, and local experts in the field of gifted education. These individuals were selected based on recommendations by the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio Association for Gifted Children, the Consortium of Ohio Coordinators for Gifted, and the Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program (U.S. Department of Education).

LOEO also asked these gifted experts to address the possible impact of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 on the identification of gifted students and "best practices" in gifted identification – especially what districts should be doing to better include previously under-represented students in the gifted identification process.

Survey of gifted numbers reported by all 612 Ohio school districts

LOEO surveyed all 612 school districts in the state to confirm the number of students reported as gifted to ODE's Education Management Information System (EMIS) as of October 2001. LOEO asked school districts for the following information:

- The number of students identified as gifted by grade level and area of giftedness;
- An explanation for any inaccuracies in the data previously reported in EMIS; and
- A response about whether or not any data problems had been resolved.

A total of 540 school districts (88%) completed and returned the survey.

Extended survey of 484 school districts

While all 612 school districts were asked to report their gifted numbers, 484 school districts also received an "extended" survey that posed questions regarding their gifted identification practices and the effects of Am. Sub. H.B. 282. The questions on the extended survey were based on information provided by the experts regarding the possible factors influencing the statewide variation in the percentage of students identified as gifted.

The sample number was determined by first stratifying all 612 districts by the percentage of students identified as gifted in June 2001. Districts identifying unusually low or high percentages of their student populations as gifted (less than 3% or greater than 20%) were automatically selected. The remaining districts were randomly selected based on a conservative estimate of a 60% response rate to ensure a statistically representative sample.

A total of 424 school districts (88%) completed and returned the extended survey. The following table shows the response rates for the extended survey based on the socio-economic comparison groups used by the Ohio Department of Education.

Extended Survey – Response Rate by ODE Comparison Group

ODE Comparison Group	Number of Respondents	Number of Recipients	Percent Responding
Island Districts or College Corner	4	4	100%
Small, Rural, High Poverty	57	63	91%
Small, Rural, Low Poverty	117	127	92%
Small Town, Rural, Avg. SES, Avg. Poverty	84	97	87%
Small City, Low SES, High Poverty	36	48	75%
Urban, Avg. SES, Avg. Poverty	29	33	88%
Large City, Avg. SES, High Poverty	7	10	70%
Urban/Suburban, Above Avg. SES, Below Avg. Poverty	70	75	93%
Urban/Suburban, High SES, Very Low Poverty	19	26	73%
Total	**423**[a]	**483**	**88%**

[a]One district not included: Monroe Local (no ODE comparison group).

The ODE comparison groups shown above were created to allow for comparisons among school districts with shared social and economic conditions. The following factors are used to determine a district's placement in one of the eight groups:

- Total average daily membership (ADM);
- Agricultural property value as a percent of residential plus agricultural property values;
- Population density;
- Non-residential/agricultural property value per pupil;
- Median income;
- Percent of population with some college education or more;
- Percent of population with "professional" or "administrative" occupations;
- "Cost of doing business" factor; and
- Mining property value as a percent of residential plus agricultural property values.

The next table provides a more detailed description of each ODE comparison group.

ODE Comparison Groups

Small, Rural, High Poverty N = 78	These districts tend to be rural districts from the Appalachian area of Ohio. As a group they have the lowest SES profiles as measured by average income levels and percent of population with some college experience.
Small, Rural, Low Poverty N = 157	These tend to be small, very rural districts outside of Appalachia. They have a workforce profile that is similar to districts in Group 1, but with much lower poverty rates.
Small Town, Rural, Avg. SES, Avg. Poverty N = 123	These districts tend to be small economic centers in rural areas of the state outside of Appalachia. The districts tend to contain both some agricultural and some small town economic characteristics.
Small City, Low SES, High Poverty N = 67	These districts tend to be small or medium size "blue collar" cities with very high poverty rates. Among urban centers, they generally have the lowest SES characteristics.
Urban, Avg. SES, Avg. Poverty N = 44	These districts tend to be both larger and have a higher SES profile than Group 4 districts. Poverty levels are average.
Large City, Avg. SES, High Poverty N = 14	This group of districts includes all of the 6 largest core cities. It also includes large urban centers that have high concentrations of poverty.
Urban/Suburban, Above Avg. SES, Below Avg. Poverty N = 89	These districts typically surround major urban centers. While they often contain industrial economic activity and modest poverty levels, they are more generally characterized as upper SES communities with a highly professional/administrative population.
Urban/Suburban, High SES, Very Low Poverty N = 35	These districts also surround major urban centers. They are distinguished by very high income levels, almost no poverty, and a very high proportion of their population characterized as professional administrative.

Examination of gifted identification plans

LOEO examined the gifted identification plan of each school district that completed and returned an extended survey. LOEO obtained the gifted identification plans from the Ohio Department of Education. Particular attention was given to the SI and II forms, which list the assessments the district uses for screening and identification. The assessments listed on these two forms were compiled into a database and analyzed to determine whether any patterns existed regarding:

- The number of districts using each assessment;
- The type of districts (e.g., large urban, suburban, etc.) using each assessment;
- The area(s) of giftedness for which the assessments are used; and
- How the assessments are used (i.e., group or individual, special populations, etc.).

As mentioned in the report, due to the manner in which school districts submit information pertaining to the assessments used for screening and identification, LOEO could not conduct any conclusive analyses about how the assessments may affect the percentage of students identified as gifted. Appendix J contains an inventory of the assessment instruments used for screening and identification.

Review of other states' gifted identification practices

To find out how Ohio's gifted identification practices compared to those used in other states, LOEO:

- Gathered available information pertaining to gifted education from the department of education websites of each state;
- Contacted education officials from each state and asked them about their gifted identification practices; and
- Analyzed articles and reports dealing with the gifted education policies of all 50 states.

Appendix D
Criteria to Identify Gifted Students Before and After Am. Sub. H.B. 282

Criteria Before Am. Sub. H.B. 282	Criteria After Am. Sub. H.B. 282
Superior Cognitive Ability	
• Perform two standard deviations above the mean, minus the standard error of measurement, on an individual standardized intelligence test administered by a qualified psychologist; **or** • Perform two standard deviations above the mean, minus the standard error of measurement, on a standardized group intelligence test **and** perform at or above the 95th percentile nationally on an individual standardized achievement test; **or** • Perform two standard deviations above the mean, minus the standard error of measurement, on a standardized group intelligence test **and** perform at or above the 95th percentile nationally on a standardized group achievement test **and** have documented superior performance.	• Score two standard deviations above the mean, minus the standard error of measurement, on an approved individual standardized intelligence test administered by a licensed psychologist; **or** • Score at least two standard deviations above the mean, minus the standard error of measurement, on an approved standardized group intelligence test; **or** • Perform at or above the 95th percentile on an approved individual or group standardized basic or composite battery of a nationally normed achievement test; **or** • Attain an approved score on one or more above-grade level standardized, nationally normed approved tests.
Specific Academic Ability	
• Perform at or above the 95th percentile on an individual standardized achievement test related to a specific academic ability; **or** • Perform at or above the 95th percentile on a standardized group achievement test related to a specific academic ability **and** documented superior performance.	• Perform at or above the 95th percentile at the national level on an approved individual or group standardized achievement test of specific academic ability in one or more of the following areas of instruction: mathematics, science, social studies, reading, writing, or a combination of reading and writing.
Creative Thinking Ability	
• Perform one standard deviation above the mean, minus the standard error of measurement, on an individual or group intelligence test **and** pass an individual or group test of creative ability; **or** • Perform one standard deviation above the mean, minus the standard error of measurement, on an individual or group intelligence test **and** pass a checklist of creative behaviors.	Same
Visual/Performing Arts Ability	
• Demonstrate superior ability in a visual or performing art (e.g., through an audition, display of work, or other means) **and** pass a checklist of behaviors related to a specific arts area.	Same

Appendix E
Identification Flow Chart

Stage 1: Pre-Assessment (Optional)

School districts gather student data information that will enable school district personnel to create a "pool" of students that require additional assessment. Information can include one or more of the following:

Grades/Progress Report	Referrals	Test Data
Portfolios/Exhibits	Interviews	Student Products

Student is not included in the pool

Student does not go on to the next stage

Student enters the pool

Student goes on to the next stage

Stage 2: Screening

School districts may assess students in the "pool" using tests approved for "screening." School districts set the necessary scores students must obtain to move on to the assessment phase.

Student does not meet district or Am. Sub. H.B. 282 criteria

Student is not identified

Student meets Am. Sub. H.B. 282 criteria

Student identified

Student meets district criteria but not Am. Sub. H.B. 282 criteria

Student goes on to the next stage

Stage 3: Assessment

Assessments approved for *identifying* gifted students are administered.

Student does not meet Am. Sub. H.B. 282 criteria

Student is not identified

Student meets Am. Sub. H.B. 282 criteria

Student identified

Appendix F
LOEO Summary of Battelle's Study of Gifted Education in Ohio

In August 2001, Battelle completed a study of gifted education for the Ohio Department of Education. The report, *Evaluation of the New Requirements for Identification of Gifted Students,* addressed the development and implementation of state-level policy and district-level plans for the identification of gifted students during the 2000-2001 school year.

To conduct the study, Battelle used the following study methods:

- Compared Ohio's gifted policy with the gifted policies of ten other states recognized for their accomplishments in gifted education.

- Interviewed and surveyed Ohio Department of Education (ODE) personnel and others who worked with ODE to implement Am. Sub. H.B. 282.

- Collected information from a statewide sample of 61 school districts regarding:

  - The development of gifted identification plans;
  - The content of gifted identification policies and plans; and
  - The implementation of gifted identification plans.

Summary of Findings

Number of gifted students

- Based on the study sample of 61 school districts, most (69%) expect that the number of students identified as gifted will increase as a result of the new identification requirements in Am. Sub. H.B. 282. The most common reason provided for this increase was that districts are testing in additional areas of giftedness and testing in more grade levels.

Methods used by school districts

- Most of the 61 school districts (93%) adopted ODE's *Model Plan for the Identification of Children Who Are Gifted* in its entirety or with minor changes.

- A majority of the 61 school districts (77%) implemented their identification plans differently than written. This was largely due to changes in the assessments used and in the implementation schedule.

- School districts use a wide variety of processes to identify gifted students. Differences in processes, tests used, and grades tested mean there is little uniformity across the state in how students are identified.

- Many school districts have not yet satisfied the new requirements to include all grade levels in their identification process for all four gifted areas due to the low priority that some districts place on the identification of gifted students, the brief amount of time that has passed since the passage of Am. Sub. H.B. 282, and the shortage of qualified personnel.

Bottom line

- Many school districts have not yet fully implemented the changes made by Am. Sub. H.B. 282.

Appendix G

Executive Summary of the 2002 Ohio Gifted Task Force's *Gifted in the 21st Century: A Report of Findings and Recommendations*

In the foreword to *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent* (Ross, 1993), former U.S. Department of Education Secretary Richard W. Riley spoke of children with gifts and talents in relation to our country's economic growth: "Our neglect for these students makes it impossible for Americans to compete in a global economy demanding their skills" (p. iii). The National Excellence report documents how our country wastes "one of its most precious resources…the gifts, talents, and high interests of many of its students" (p. 1). At a time when Ohio desires to become a leader in high-tech enterprises to meet the challenges of a global economy, its youngest citizens with the greatest potential to become the future leaders and creators of these enterprises often are not challenged.

In response, Dr. Susan Tave Zelman, Ohio's state superintendent of public instruction, commissioned the Ohio Gifted Task Force to make recommendations as to how Ohio could develop this "most precious resource" to benefit individual children and to improve the future economic success of our state. In the summer of 2002, the Task Force met six times over the course of two months to review the status of gifted education in Ohio and the latest state and national research on best practices in gifted education.

After reviewing their experiences with gifted education in Ohio in the context of this research, the Task Force found that current practice has not dramatically improved educational opportunities for children who are gifted. Indeed, the warning of a "quiet crisis in educating talented students" (Ross, 1993, p. 5) is still relevant. Although Ohio, since 1984, has addressed the identification of children who are gifted, districts are not required by state law to provide appropriate services to meet the needs of these students.

The Task Force's analysis of their experiences with gifted education in Ohio in the context of the latest research and best professional practice resulted in the following findings related to the status of education for children who are gifted in Ohio:

- **Finding 1: Policy:** Policies at both state and local levels should promote educational opportunities for children who are gifted. Many local board of education policies present barriers to best practices in the education of children who are gifted. Further, some state procedures and other policies may be detrimental to the provision of services for these children.

- **Finding 2: Accountability:** Currently, schools are not held accountable for ensuring that children who are gifted are served according to their needs. There is no system in place to ensure these children reach their full potential. Ohio's report card system, while addressing district results in proficiency, does not specifically address children who are gifted. In addition, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) has not yet addressed the gifted population in the state accountability system or in the guidelines and subsequent documents from the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (*No Child Left Behind*). If Ohio is to enter the 21st century as a leader in gifted education, accountability for all children, including

children who are gifted, will need to be an integral component of all policy and accountability decisions.

- **Finding 3: Services and Identification:** Currently, districts are not required to offer any services to children who are identified as gifted. A recent survey indicated that during the 1998-1999 school year, of the 236,804 children identified as gifted in Ohio, only 103,087, or 43.5 percent, were receiving any kind of service. Of those receiving services, only 41,245, or 40 percent, were receiving services through state funding. Without a system that supports acceleration, differentiation options and other appropriate services, the probability increases that children who are gifted will become alienated from school.

  It is critical to accurately identify children's gifted areas to know what services to provide. Ohio Administrative Code (3301-51-15) requires districts to identify in the areas of superior cognitive ability, specific academic ability, creative ability and visual and performing arts ability. Even though Ohio has mandated that districts identify children from kindergarten through grade 12, too little emphasis has been placed on the early identification of children who are gifted. In addition, many special populations go unnoticed in the identification process. Without attention to these underrepresented populations, appropriate services cannot be planned or provided.

- **Finding 4: Educators Who Serve Children Who Are Gifted:** Current teacher preparation programs in Ohio do not require any coursework in differentiated instruction, assessment or appropriate service options for children who are gifted. According to Passow and Rudinski (1993), most states acknowledge the crucial role of teachers in the identification and education of the gifted and the need for providing staff development. Without adequate knowledge, attitudes and skills, teachers are unable to provide differentiated instruction to children who are gifted. From the results of the Ohio Survey on Gifted Education, Joyce Van Tassel-Baska (1997) found that staff development on the needs of gifted students was often infrequent or nonexistent for Ohio teachers.

- **Finding 5: Funding:** Ohio school districts vary widely in the options and services available to children identified as gifted. Those with more local resources are able to offer additional services, in contrast to districts that depend on state dollars alone. Even with local dollars, however, only 8 percent of districts reported that all of their identified gifted students were receiving services during the 1998-1999 school year. Van Tassel-Baska (1997) reported: "State funding is pivotal to maintaining gifted programs in the state of Ohio."

- **Finding 6: Leadership:** ODE currently funds two consultants for gifted. To build capacity for the task force's recommendations, it is critical for additional staff to be funded to serve Ohio's school districts. Technical assistance, policy review and development, professional development and accountability are critical activities of state leadership.

- **Finding 7: Families and Community:** VanTassel-Baska (1997) recommends stronger parent involvement in local programming in Ohio districts. Families and community are an integral part of all children's education. It is imperative that ODE and local districts

acknowledge the importance of families in the entire process of educating our children who are gifted.

While it is critical for Ohio educational leaders to "leave no child behind" in the plans to reform the education system, it is equally important to "hold no child back" from maximizing his or her abilities and potential contributions to society. Ohio can no longer tell its brightest students "not yet" or "we can't teach you that" when they strive to move faster than their peers through the traditional school curriculum. Providing an appropriate education for children who are gifted is indeed an investment in our economy and, ultimately, a successful future for our state.

Accordingly, the Task Force offered the following four broad recommendations and action steps that will move Ohio to the forefront nationally in providing an appropriate education for children who are gifted:

- **Recommendation 1: Policy:** ODE will address the needs of children who are gifted in all policies and standards, including *the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind)*. For example, the method developed to determine adequate yearly progress (AYP) must be able to measure the growth of children who are gifted.

  State policies will be developed to support high expectations for all children and provide children who are gifted with numerous opportunities for reaching their potential. Such policies, adopted by the State Board of Education, will be implemented in all school districts.

  ODE will review current policies that may contain barriers to the education of children who are gifted. Further, ODE also will establish state policy that will require local boards of education to examine and remove local policies that present barriers to children who are gifted from reaching their full potential.

- **Recommendation 2: Accountability:** Ohio will define "adequate yearly progress" for children who are gifted and use a state accountability system that overcomes the challenges of assessing the growth of gifted children. All districts will be held accountable for a level of growth consistent with each gifted child's written education plan (WEP). This should include, but not be limited to, growth in achievement, creative production and social and emotional skills. Accountability for services will be included in Ohio's accountability system, including the Local Report Card. Although accountability for an individual child's growth is the ultimate goal, the overall accountability system will also include measures of the critical components of quality services for children who are gifted, such as family involvement, educational planning and utilization of resources.

- **Recommendation 3: Services and Identification:** By 2012, all districts in the state of Ohio will assess and identify children for giftedness using best practices. In addition, those children identified as gifted will receive appropriate services based upon their identified areas of strength in appropriate settings at the local, regional and state level.

- **Recommendation 4: Educators Who Serve Children Who Are Gifted:** All educators in Ohio will have the skills and abilities they need to plan, develop and deliver services to children who are gifted. To develop these skills, all educators, including teachers, administrators, school counselors, school psychologists and other support service providers will have formal training in meeting both the academic and the social and emotional needs of children who are gifted. It is critical that teachers have the skills to provide instruction in a differentiated manner. Therefore, it is recommended that ODE work with the Ohio Board of Regents to ensure all teachers have appropriate preservice and inservice training.

Finally, the Task Force describes action steps to successfully implement their recommendations by the year 2012. Implementing many of these action steps requires changes in state and local policies, while others may require more substantial changes in law and increased funding of services for children who are gifted. The Ohio Gifted Task Force firmly believes that all of the recommendations are critical if Ohio is to achieve its bold mission of becoming a national leader in the education of all children, including those who are gifted, by 2012.

Appendix H
Technical Details Regarding the Analyses Conducted by LOEO

Data used in this LOEO report

This LOEO report uses year-end gifted and enrollment data submitted by Ohio school districts to the Education Management Information System (EMIS). The year-end data used in this report, also called a "head count," include students that were enrolled in a given school district for any amount of time during the preceding school year. School districts begin reporting these data in June of each year, but have until November of the next school year to finalize their submissions.

Statewide totals based on this type of data will count some students more than once. For example, when a student transfers from one school district to another during the same school year, that student is included in both school districts' head count. The Ohio Department of Education told LOEO that the number of students duplicated due to transfers is probably small. Until the 2001-2002 school year, this was the only type of year-end gifted data available.

Beginning with the 2001-2002 school year, a year-end gifted ADM, or average daily membership, is available. This type of data appropriately accounts for students who may not attend a school district for the entire year. Simply stated, if a student transfers from one school district to another half way through the school year, only one half of that student is attributed to each district's ADM. Statewide totals based on this type of data will be a more accurate accounting of the *number* of students identified as gifted in the state.

Because it was necessary in this report to compare school districts' gifted data over time, LOEO chose to use head count data for each school year analyzed, including the 2001-2002 school year. Therefore, the percentage of gifted students presented in this report may differ slightly from any percentage based on ADM. For the first time, the 2003 Local Report Card, which reports on the 2001-2002 school year, will include each school district's "percentage of students identified as gifted." This percentage will be calculated using the school district's gifted ADM, not the head count.

"Preliminary" EMIS data. Due to the timing of this report, it was necessary for LOEO to use "preliminary" June 2002 data for some of its analyses. These preliminary data were submitted by school districts prior to the November 2002 deadline. Because some school districts had not yet made their submission, and others still had the opportunity to fix any mistakes, LOEO was careful to exclude school districts where obvious data problems existed. That process is described below.

Analyses based on preliminary June 2002 data, received by LOEO in late September, are found in Chapters III and IV and Appendix I. The June 2002 statewide numbers and percentages found in Chapter II are based on the **final data** for June 2002, submitted by November 2002.

Process for excluding school districts from analysis

As mentioned, some of the analyses for this report are based on "preliminary" year-end data for the 2001-2002 school year. Due to their preliminary nature, LOEO examined the data and excluded 30 school districts from its analysis. First, LOEO sorted out school districts whose "preliminary" data indicated the following:

- An extreme percentage of students identified as gifted (two standard deviations above or below the average for districts of similar size and socio-economic status); and
- A dramatic change in the percentage of students identified as gifted from the previous reporting period (two standard deviations above or below the average for districts of similar size and socio-economic status).

If a school district met only *one* of the conditions shown above, LOEO considered whether or not the data for the condition that was not met fell outside of *one* standard deviation. If so, and if the school district had experienced any difficulty with its *last* EMIS gifted submission (as indicated in its response to the LOEO survey), LOEO considered that school district for exclusion. LOEO then telephoned these school districts and discussed their data.

Twenty-eight school districts were ultimately excluded. An additional two school districts, College Corner Local and North Bass Local, were also excluded. College Corner Local is a shared school district with the State of Indiana. North Bass Local enrolls fewer than ten students. Given the unique circumstances of these districts and the fact that both identified zero students as gifted, LOEO felt it would be misleading to include them in its analysis. The table below shows the number of school districts excluded by ODE comparison group.

School Districts Excluded from Analyses Using Preliminary June 2002 Data

ODE Comparison Group	Total Number of Districts in Group	Number of Districts Excluded	Percent of Districts Remaining
Island school districts and College Corner Local	4	2	50%
Small, Rural, High Poverty	78	2	97%
Small, Rural, Low Poverty	157	4	98%
Small Town, Rural, Avg. SES, Avg. Poverty	123	5	96%
Small City, Low SES, High Poverty	67	5	93%
Urban, Avg. SES, Avg. Poverty	44	1	98%
Large City, Avg. SES, High Poverty	14	4	71%
Urban/Suburban, Above Avg. SES, Below Avg. Poverty	89	4	96%
Urban/Suburban, High SES, Very Low Poverty	35	3	91%
Total	**611**[a]	**30**	**95%**

[a]One district not included: Monroe Local (no ODE comparison group).

As noted for the statewide analyses in Chapter II, LOEO used the "final" version of the June 2002 EMIS data, including *all* 612 school districts, with one exception. When illustrating the *variance* in the percentage of students identified as gifted across school districts, LOEO believed it was misleading to include school districts with data it knew to be suspect. Using the same process as described above, LOEO identified 18 school districts for exclusion. The table below shows the number of school districts excluded by ODE comparison group.

School Districts Excluded from Analyses Using Final June 2002 Data

ODE Comparison Group	Total Number of Districts in Group	Number of Districts Excluded	Percent of Districts Remaining
Island school districts and College Corner Local	4	2	50%
Small, Rural, High Poverty	78	1	99%
Small, Rural, Low Poverty	157	2	99%
Small Town, Rural, Avg. SES, Avg. Poverty	123	6	95%
Small City, Low SES, High Poverty	67	3	96%
Urban, Avg. SES, Avg. Poverty	44	1	98%
Large City, Avg. SES, High Poverty	14	2	86%
Urban/Suburban, Above Avg. SES, Below Avg. Poverty	89	1	99%
Urban/Suburban, High SES, Very Low Poverty	35	0	100%
Total	**611**[a]	**18**	**97%**

[a]One district not included: Monroe Local (no ODE comparison group).

Due to time constraints, however, LOEO did not telephone these 18 school districts to discuss their data.

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Grade levels included in analyses

The Education Management Information System (EMIS) collects student data for 23 different grade levels. For the 2003 Local Report Card, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) will calculate a "percentage of students identified as gifted" for each school district based on data from 19 of those grade levels. LOEO chose to use the same grade levels as the Local Report Card in its calculations. The table below describes all 23 grade levels and indicates which 19 of those grade levels are included in the analyses for this report.

Student Grade Levels Included in LOEO Analysis

Code	Description	Included in LOEO Analysis
KG	Kindergarten	✓
KH	Kindergarten Handicapped	✓
1	First Grade	✓
2	Second Grade	✓
3	Third Grade	✓
4	Fourth Grade	✓
5	Fifth Grade	✓
6	Sixth Grade	✓
7	Seventh Grade	✓
8	Eighth Grade	✓
9	Ninth Grade	✓
10	Tenth Grade	✓
11	Eleventh Grade	✓
12	Twelfth Grade	✓
UG	No grade level (Ungraded)	✓
DC	Preschool (ages 0-2)	
PS	Preschool (ages 3-5)	
PH	Preschool Handicapped	✓
PK	Preschool Handicapped when the disability condition is "11" and grade level is "KG" or "KH"	✓
13	Enrolled, completed course requirements but has not passed proficiency	✓
23	Student who has been identified as having a disability condition, who has completed educational requirements and elects to remain for further training, is under age 22, and has not graduated	✓
30	Adult, non-high school completer	
31	Adult, high school completer	

Statistical tools

A variety of statistical tools were used for the analyses in this report. The table below shows the various tools, describes when each was applied, and offers examples of each.

Statistical Tools Used in LOEO Analysis

Statistical Tool	Application	Example	Chapters
T-test	Used when making a comparison between two groups.	Do districts that use whole-grade assessments report higher percentages of students as gifted?	Chapter IV
ANOVA (Analysis of variance)*	Used when making comparisons among more than two groups.	Do districts in different ODE comparison groups report different percentages of students as gifted?	Chapter IV
Correlation (Pearson)	Used when examining the relationship between two variables.	Is there a relationship between the percentage of racial minority students a district reports as gifted and the overall percentage of students it reports as gifted?	Chapter IV
Chi-square (Test of representativeness)	Used when examining the representativeness of a group in a population.	Is the proportion of racial minority students reported as gifted higher, lower, or about the same as expected given their proportion of the total student population?	Chapter III and Appendix I

*A post hoc comparison was also done using the Tukey procedure to test all possible comparisons among the eight comparison groups.

Appendix I
Additional Findings Regarding the Percentage of Students Reported as Gifted

This appendix provides additional findings for several of the analyses discussed in Chapter III. As mentioned in Appendix H, except where noted otherwise, the information provided for these analyses is based on preliminary June 2002 data submitted by school districts to EMIS in September 2002. Findings based on the final June 2002 data can be found in Chapter II of this report.

Percentage of Students Reported as Gifted by Grade Level

Overall state percentage. As mentioned in the report, LOEO found that in June 2002, the greatest percentages of students reported as gifted were in grades three through eight (16%-17%).

By gifted area. There were declining percentages of gifted students in the secondary grades within each area of giftedness. The one exception is the area of visual/performing arts. The percentage of students reported as gifted in this area continues to increase across grade levels through grade twelve.

By socio-economic status. The declining percentages of gifted students in the secondary grades are also seen within each group of school districts created by ODE on the basis of district size and socio-economic status. The one exception is large city school districts, which report, for the most part, increasingly higher percentages of gifted students through grade twelve.

Percentage of Students Reported as Gifted by Area of Giftedness

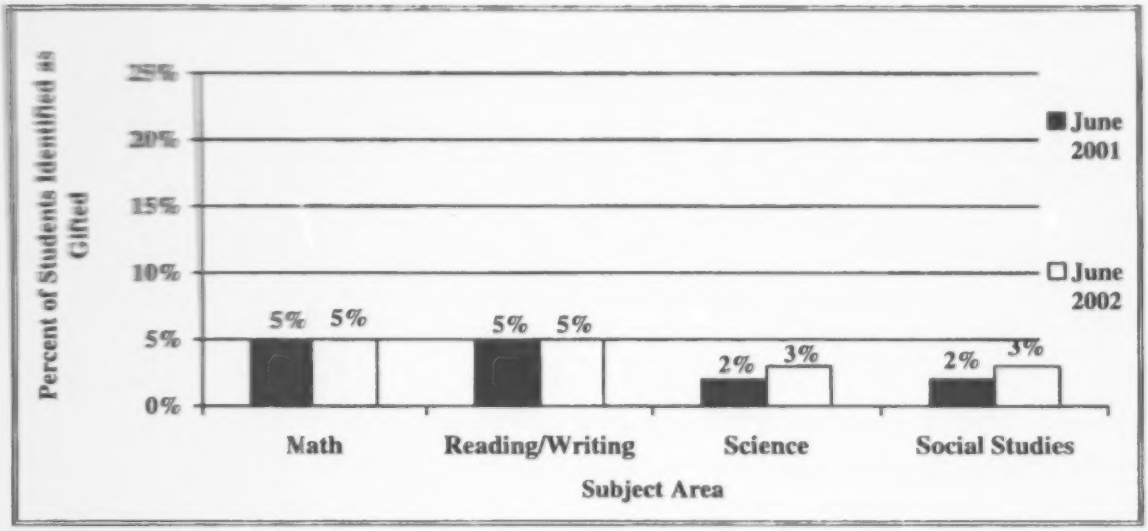
Among the four areas of giftedness and the subject areas included under specific academic ability, there are a total of seven different areas of giftedness. On average, each gifted student is identified in two (of the possible seven) areas of giftedness. Of the 235,597 students reported as gifted in the 582 school districts examined by LOEO:

- 73% were identified as having specific academic ability;
- 38% were identified as having superior cognitive ability;
- 21% were identified with creative thinking ability; and
- 17% were identified in the visual/performing arts.

Within the area of specific academic ability, the percentage of students reported as gifted increased in the subject areas of science and social studies from June 2001 to June 2002. The highest percentages, however, are seen for math and reading/writing. The following table

illustrates the percentage of students reported as gifted in each subject area for June 2001 and June 2002.

Percentage of Students Reported as Gifted with Specific Academic Ability (by Subject Area) June 2001 and June 2002



Source: Ohio Department of Education, EMIS – final data

As mentioned earlier, Am. Sub. H.B. 282 was the *first time* the four academic areas included within specific academic ability were mentioned in law. Before this law went into effect, most school districts focused on math and reading/writing when identifying gifted students.

Percentage of Students Reported as Gifted by Under-Represented Group

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students

In June 2002, LEP students made up 1% of the total student population and 0.3% of all students reported as gifted. The percentage of LEP students reported as gifted was statistically lower than their proportion of the total student population.

In June 2002, 4.2% of *all LEP students* were reported as gifted.

This same general pattern of statistically lower percentages of gifted LEP students is also seen for each area of giftedness and by ODE comparison group.

Disabled students

While it should not be expected that students with all types of disabilities be reported as gifted in the same proportion they represent of the total student population, students with disabilities can and should be identified as gifted when appropriate.

Overall state percentage. In June 2002, students with disabilities made up 13.1% of the total student population; however, they were only 2.8% of all students reported as gifted.

Of *all disabled students*, 2.9% are reported as gifted.

By gifted area. The proportionately low percentages of disabled students reported as gifted are also seen within each area of giftedness. Although students of all disability categories were under-represented among gifted students, students with visual impairments were most likely to be reported as gifted (8.4%), while students with multiple handicaps were least likely to be reported as gifted (0.2%).

By socio-economic status. The same general pattern of low percentages of disabled students reported as gifted exists across all ODE comparison groups.

Racial/ethnic minorities

Five racial/ethnic minority groups were reported in EMIS: American Indian, Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial. In June 2002, the percentages of students reported as gifted in all of these minority groups were lower than expected given their share of the total student population, with the exception of Asian students. The chart below shows each racial/ethnic group as a percentage of the gifted population and the total student population.

Percentage of Students Reported as Gifted for Each Racial/Ethnic Group
June 2002

Racial/Ethnic Group	Percent of Gifted Population	Percent of Total Student Population
American Indian	0.08%	0.13%
Asian	2.0%	1.3%
Black	6.0%	12.8%
Hispanic	0.6%	1.6%
Multiracial	1.0%	1.5%
White	90.2%	82.7%

Source: Ohio Department of Education, EMIS – preliminary data

The following chart shows the percentages of students reported as gifted *within each racial/ethnic group.*

Percentage of Students Reported as Gifted Within Each Racial/Ethnic Group
June 2002

Percent of all **American Indian** students reported as gifted	8.9%
Percent of all **Asian** students reported as gifted	21.8%
Percent of all **Black** students reported as gifted	6.4%
Percent of all **Hispanic** students reported as gifted	5.5%
Percent of all **Multiracial** students reported as gifted	9.5%
Percent of all **White** students reported as gifted	15.0%
Percent of **all students** reported as gifted	13.0%

Source: Ohio Department of Education, EMIS – preliminary data

By gifted area. This same general pattern of proportionately lower percentages of racial/ethnic minority groups reported as gifted exists within each area of giftedness, with one exception: a higher than expected percentage of black students was reported in the area of creative thinking.

By socio-economic status. This same general pattern of low percentages of racial/ethnic minority groups reported as gifted also exists within each ODE comparison group with a few exceptions:

- Although when the state as a whole was considered, a higher than expected percentage of black students was reported in the area of creative thinking, when broken down by comparison group, no single group reported a higher than expected percentage of black students in the same area; and

- Large city school districts reported higher than expected percentages of black students in the visual/performing arts, and higher than expected percentages of multiracial students in the superior cognitive and specific academic areas.

Percentage of Students Reported as Gifted by Gender

Overall state percentage. In June 2002, girls made up 51.5% of the total student population and 50.7% of the gifted population. Boys made up 48.5% of the total student population and 49.3% of the gifted population. Considering their proportions of the total student population, therefore, the percentage of girls reported as gifted is low, while the percentage of boys reported as gifted is high.

Of the total number of girls making up the student population, 13.5% are reported as gifted. Fourteen percent of all boys are reported as gifted.

By gifted area. Considering their proportion of the total student population, lower than expected percentages of girls were reported as gifted in the areas of superior cognitive ability, creative thinking ability, and visual/performing arts ability. The opposite was seen for boys, with higher than expected percentages reported as gifted in these same areas.

Girls seemed to fare better in the specific academic areas. The proportion of girls reported as gifted was higher than expected for each subject area while the proportion of boys reported in the same areas was lower. The one exception was reading/writing, where the percentage of girls reported as gifted was lower than expected.

By socio-economic status. Within each ODE comparison group, the proportion of girls reported as gifted was lower than expected - and the proportion of boys higher than expected - with one exception. The percentage of girls reported as gifted in suburban districts (with high SES and very low poverty) was higher than expected while the percentage of boys was lower than expected given their proportion of the total population.

Appendix J
Assessments Approved for Screening and Identification by Area of Giftedness

Test Number	Superior Cognitive Ability Test Name	Districts Using This Test (N=405)			
		Screening		Identification	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
10	Bateria Woodcock-Munoz-Revisada (Bateria-R)	31	8%	27	7%
11	Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Form 5	220	54%	202	50%
12	Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) Nonverbal Battery, Edicion en Espanol	172	43%	145	36%
13	Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessments Systems	54	13%	100	25%
14	Differential Ability Scales (DAS)	28	7%	76	19%
15	Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test	234	58%		
16	Leiter International Performance Scale-Revised	74	18%	110	27%
17	Raven's Progressive Matrices (Standard and Advanced Form)	161	40%	149	37%
18	Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, 4th ed.	50	12%	134	33%
19	Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence	38	9%		
20	Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, 3rd ed.	99	24%	278	69%
21	Woodcock-Johnson-Revised: Test of Cognitive Ability (WJ-R), and Form A, Achievement Battery	144	36%	215	53%
22	ACT Assessment Program (AAP)	28	7%	16	4%
23	Comprehensive Testing Program 3rd edition	2	2%		
24	EXPLORE			1	0%
25	Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Form K/L/M, Complete Battery	18	4%	15	4%
26	Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Form K/L/M, Survey Battery	1	0%		
27	Iowa Tests of Educational Development, Form K/L/M, Complete Battery	7	2%	2	1%
28	Iowa Tests of Educational Development, Form K/L/M, Survey Battery	0	0%		
29	Metropolitan Achievement Tests, 7th edition	4	1%	6	2%
30	PLAN			9	2
31	SAT I Reasoning Test	5	1%	4	1%
32	Stanford Achievement Test Series, 9th ed., Abbreviated Battery	0	0%		
33	Stanford Achievement Test Series, 9th ed.	13	3%	11	3%
34	Stanford Achievement Test Series, 9th ed., Form SA	1	0%	1	0%
35	Terra Nova (CTBS/5)	25	6%	29	7%
36	Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP), Form K/L/M, Survey Battery	0	0%		
37	Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP), Form K/L/M, Complete Battery	0	0%	1	0%
38	Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)	5	1%	11	3%
49	Otis-Lennon School Ability Test, 6th ed.	25	6%	19	5%
51	Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-Revised	7	2%	19	5%
52	California Achievement Tests, 5th ed.	11	3%	5	1%
53	Otis-Lennon School Ability Test, 7th ed.	75	19%	83	20%
54	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS/4)	1	0%	4	1%
55	Aprenda: La prueba de logros en Espanol	0	0%	0	0%
56	Test of Cognitive Skills, 2nd ed. (TCS/2)	62	15%	52	13%
57	InView-A Measure of Cognitive Abilities	1	0%	1	0%

*Shaded areas indicate that test is not approved for that purpose.

Test Number	Superior Cognitive Ability (continued) Test Name	Districts Using This Test (N=405)			
		Screening		Identification	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
62	Metropolitan Achievement Tests, 8th ed., Basic Battery	0	0%	0	0%
63	Metropolitan Achievement Tests, 8th ed., Complete Battery	0	0%	0	0%
64	Metropolitan Achievement Tests, 8th ed., Short Form	0	0%		
65	Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)	0	0%		
66	Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary and Middle School Students, 2nd ed.	0	0%		
70	Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test	0	0%	0	0%
71	Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Achievement	0	0%	0	0%
72	Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Cognitive Abilities, Abbreviated	0	0%		
73	Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Cognitive Abilities, Extended	0	0%	0	0%
74	Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Cognitive Abilities, Standard	0	0%	0	0%
75	Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Form 6	0	0%	0	0%

*Shaded areas indicate that test is not approved for that purpose.

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Test Number	Specific Academic Ability Test Name	Districts Using This Test (N=405)			
		Screening		Identification	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
10	Bateria Woodcock-Munoz-Revisada (Bateria-R)	38	9%	39	10%
21	Woodcock-Johnson-Revised: Test of Cognitive Ability (WJ-R), and Form A, Achievement Battery	270	67%	316	78%
22	ACT Assessment Program (AAP)	79	20%	88	22%
23	Comprehensive Testing Program, 3rd edition	1	0%		
24	EXPLORE			14	4%
25	Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Form K/L/M, Complete Battery	208	51%	188	46%
26	Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Form K/L/M, Survey Battery	33	8%		
27	Iowa Tests of Educational Development, Form K/L/M, Complete Battery	65	16%	44	11%
28	Iowa Tests of Educational Development, Form K/L/M, Survey Battery	11	3%		
29	Metropolitan Achievement Tests, 7th edition	48	12%	54	13%
30	PLAN			60	15%
31	SAT I Reasoning Test	64	16%	76	19%
32	Stanford Achievement Test Series, 9th ed., Abbreviated Battery	19	5%		
33	Stanford Achievement Test Series, 9th ed.	102	25%	94	23%
34	Stanford Achievement Test Series, 9th ed., Form SA	15	4%	21	5%
35	Terra Nova (CTBS/5)	132	33%	117	29%
36	Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP), Survey Battery	1	0%		
37	Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP), Complete Battery	7	2%	7	2%
38	Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)	135	33%	193	48%
52	California Achievement Tests, 5th ed.	27	7%	17	4%
54	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS/4)	2	1%	2	1%
55	Aprenda: La prueba de logros en Espanol	0	0%	0	0%
58	Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS), Form A, Complete Battery	0	0%	0	0%
59	Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS), Form A, Survey Battery	0	0%	0	0%
60	Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED), Form A, Core Battery	0	0%	0	0%
61	Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED), Form A, Complete Battery	0	0%	0	0%
62	Metropolitan Achievement Tests, 8th ed., Basic Battery	0	0%	0	0%
63	Metropolitan Achievement Tests, 8th ed., Complete Battery	0	0%	0	0%
64	Metropolitan Achievement Tests, 8th ed., Short Form	0	0%	0	0%
66	Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary and Middle School Students, 2nd ed.	0	0%	0	0%
67	Terra Nova, The Second Edition California Achievement Test, Complete Battery	0	0%	0	0%
68	Terra Nova, The Second Edition California Achievement Test, Multiple Assessments	1	0%	0	0%
69	Terra Nova, The Second Edition California Achievement Test, Survey Versions	0	0%	0	0%
71	Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Achievement	1	0%	1	0%

*Shaded areas indicate that test was not approved for that purpose.

Test Number	Creative Thinking Ability Test Name	Districts Using This Test (N=405)			
		Screening		Identification	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
10	Bateria Woodcock-Munoz-Revisada (Bateria-R)	27	7%	24	6%
11	Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Form 5	216	53%	188	46%
12	Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) Nonverbal Battery, Edicion en Espanol	167	41%	129	32%
13	Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessments Systems	45	11%	89	22%
14	Differential Ability Scales (DAS)	23	6%	65	16%
15	Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test	192	47%		
16	Leiter International Performance Scale-Revised	64	16%	100	25%
17	Raven's Progressive Matrices (Standard and Advanced Form)	136	34%	124	31%
18	Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, 4th ed.	48	12%	122	30%
19	Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence	25	6%		
20	Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, 3rd ed.	87	22%	219	54%
21	Woodcock-Johnson-Revised: Tests of Cognitive Ability (WJ-R) and Form A, Achievement Battery	118	29%	182	45%
23	Comprehensive Testing Program, 3rd edition	9	2%		
39	Scales for Rating the Behavior Characteristics of Superior Students (Creativity: Part II)	210	52%	209	52%
41	Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales (GATES) (Creative Thinking: Section IV, Items 21-30)	213	53%	291	72%
49	Otis-Lennon School Ability Test, 6th ed.	14	4%	16	4%
51	Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-Revised	6	2%	10	3%
53	Otis-Lennon School Ability Test, 7th ed.	69	17%	70	17%
56	Test of Cognitive Skills, 2nd ed. (TCS/2)	52	13%	43	11%
72	Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Cognitive Abilities, Abbreviated	0	0%		
73	Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Cognitive Abilities, Extended	0	0%	0	0%
74	Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Cognitive Abilities, Standard	0	0%	0	0%

*Shaded areas indicate that test is not approved for that purpose.

Test Number	Visual and Performing Arts Test Name	Districts Using This Test (N=405)			
		Screening		Identification	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
39	Scales for Rating the Behavior Characteristics of Superior Students, 1997 Version (Musical: Part VI; Dramatic: Part VII; Artistic: Part V)	233	58%	241	60%
40	Clark's Drawing Abilities Test	34	8%	31	8%
41	Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales (GATES) (Creative Thinking: Section IV, Items 21-30; Visual or Performing Arts: Section IV, Items 41-50)	263	65%	298	74%
42	Dance Talent Assessment Process (DTAP)	28	7%	31	8%
43	Theatre Arts Talent Assessment Process (TTAP)	25	6%	27	7%
44	Ohio Dept. of Education Music Performance Rubric, Forms A and B	102	25%	129	32%
45	Music Talent Assessment Process (MTAP)	25	6%	28	7%
46	Art Advanced Placement Scoring Guidelines	38	9%	48	12%
47	Display of Work, Audition, or Performance (Observation or Evaluation)	286	71%	374	92%
48	Display of Work	116	29%	306	76%

*Shaded areas indicate that test is not approved for that purpose.

Appendix K
Additional Findings on Gifted Identification in Other States

This appendix provides an overview of LOEO's findings regarding gifted identification in other states. The information was obtained from state department of education officials and from data obtained at education websites of each state.

Overview

- 47 states, including Ohio, currently have *laws* that address gifted education
- 42 states, including Ohio, currently have *rules* pertaining to gifted education
- 48 states, Ohio included, have an official definition for giftedness
  - *Primary themes mentioned in these definitions:*
    - *The specific area(s) of giftedness recognized by the state; and*
    - *Characteristics of gifted students:*
      - *Need educational services beyond those available in a regular education program*
      - *Exhibit a high level of ability*
      - *Perform at high levels*
- 43 states recognize one or more of the following areas of giftedness (Ohio recognizes all four):
  - *Intellectual/cognitive ability;*
  - *Specific academic ability;*
  - *Creative thinking ability; and*
  - *Visual/performing arts ability.*
- 32 states, including Ohio, mandate the identification of gifted students
  - *28 of these 32 states mandate gifted services*
  - *4 of these states, including Ohio, do not mandate gifted services*
- 28 states mandate school districts to provide **services** to gifted students
- 32 states, including Ohio, use multiple criteria at some point during the identification process
- 27 states, including Ohio, have laws and/or rules that specify the need to consider students from under-represented populations during the gifted identification process. Under-represented students are:
  - *Racial/ethnic minorities;*
  - *Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students;*
  - *Disadvantaged students; and*
  - *Disabled students.*

- Only two states, including Ohio, specify the assessments that must be used for identification

- 13 states, including Ohio, specify the assessment cut scores that students must reach to be identified as gifted
  - *2 of these states use both percentiles and standard deviations*
  - *9 of these states use percentiles*
  - *2 of these states use standard deviations*

Gifted Identification and Service Mandates in All 50 States

State	Mandates Gifted Identification		Mandates Services for Gifted Students		State	Mandates Gifted Identification		Mandates Services for Gifted Students	
	Y	N	Y	N		Y	N	Y	N
Alabama	✓		✓		Montana	✓		✓	
Alaska	✓		✓		Nebraska	✓			✓
Arizona	✓		✓		Nevada		✓		✓
Arkansas	✓		✓		New Hampshire		✓		✓
California		✓		✓	New Jersey	✓		✓	
Colorado		✓		✓	New Mexico	✓		✓	
Connecticut	✓			✓	New York		✓		✓
Delaware		✓		✓	North Carolina	✓		✓	
Florida	✓		✓		North Dakota		✓		✓
Georgia	✓		✓		Ohio	✓			✓
Hawaii	✓			✓	Oklahoma	✓		✓	
Idaho	✓		✓		Oregon	✓		✓	
Illinois	✓		✓		Pennsylvania	✓		✓	
Indiana		✓		✓	Rhode Island		✓		✓
Iowa	✓		✓		South Carolina	✓		✓	
Kansas	✓		✓		South Dakota		✓		✓
Kentucky	✓		✓		Tennessee	✓		✓	
Louisiana	✓		✓		Texas	✓		✓	
Maine	✓		✓		Utah	✓		✓	
Maryland		✓		✓	Vermont		✓		✓
Massachusetts		✓		✓	Virginia	✓		✓	
Michigan		✓		✓	Washington		✓		✓
Minnesota		✓		✓	West Virginia	✓		✓	
Mississippi	✓		✓		Wisconsin	✓		✓	
Missouri		✓		✓	Wyoming		✓		✓

Comments

Agency Comments

- Ohio Department of Education
- Ohio Association for Gifted Children
- Consortium of Ohio Coordinators for the Gifted

LOEO Response

Department of
Education

Susan Tave Zelman

Superintendent of Public Instruction

To: Nancy C. Zajano, Director
Legislative Office of Education Oversight
From: Susan Tave Zelman, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Date: April 16, 2003
Re: Comments for LOEO Report – *Identification of Gifted Students in Ohio*

The Legislative Office for Education Oversight's (LOEO) report, Identification of Gifted Students in Ohio, documented the identification of gifted students in Ohio using the most accurate information currently available. The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) appreciates the information LOEO has provided regarding the numbers of students identified in Ohio. ODE will use the information provided by the study to continue its efforts to help districts provide quality services to Ohio students identified as gifted.

Our only concern about the report is related to the LOEO statement that requirements of Am. Sub. H. B. 282 are not yet fully implemented in all school districts. In its survey, LOEO asked each school district to describe its "status in implementing its plan for identifying gifted students." Approximately 50% of districts reported that their plan was only partially implemented.

We interpret the 50 % implementation finding as a natural and laudable expression by gifted professionals that they have much more they want to accomplish. We do not believe that this figure represents non-compliance with the law itself, as our records clearly show that virtually all districts meet the threshold requirements of the statute.

Our data indicates that:

- Over 99% of districts have submitted approved identification plans to ODE, including all of the requirements in the statute; and
- The gifted education staff at ODE receive extremely few complaints from parents where districts are not fulfilling the requirements of Am. Sub. H. B. 282.

In describing their gifted identification plan, gifted education professionals include many activities that go above and beyond the requirements of Am. Sub. H. B. 282, such as whole-grade screening and actively seeking out every possible gifted child at every grade level and in every area of giftedness.

ODE stands ready to work with these professionals and state policy makers to move gifted education from the minimum requirements of the law to best practices for all students. Together, we will identify and provide rich learning opportunities for Ohio's gifted students.

Response to the Legislative Office of Education Oversight Committee Report "Identification of Gifted Students in Ohio"

The Ohio Association for Gifted Children (OAGC) greatly appreciates and respects the work conducted by the Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) on the "Identification of Gifted Students in Ohio" report. The report includes some useful and interesting findings. Of particular interest is the under-identification of minority gifted students which appears to match the national experience and the importance of teacher training in the identification of gifted students. Unfortunately, the same issue that appears to trouble LOEO with respect to gifted identification also appears to affect the LOEO report on the subject: LOEO never analyses the effect of H.B. 282 on the actual service of gifted students. The relationship between service and identification is essential to understand especially as service to gifted students is not mandated in Ohio. This shortcoming along with others has produced a report that, in the end, raises more questions than it answers, which given the narrow focus is to be expected. OAGC is particularly troubled by the following issues:

- **Integrity of the Data Used in the LOEO Study** -- The majority of the data used in this study was collected through the EMIS system. While districts technically reported gifted data through EMIS for years, until 2000 the official gifted child count was collected manually through "green sheets," a simple hardcopy sent to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) from districts. The official count rarely matched the EMIS gifted count. In the spring of 1999, ODE decided to rely solely on the EMIS data collected. EMIS was redesigned to accommodate the changes required in H.B. 282. While districts attempted to reconcile their count with the state EMIS count, the process was troubled by an overcomplicated data entry process along with both major and minor difficulties in data transfer from districts to A-sites and then from A-sites to the state system.

  One of the most disturbing aspects of the LOEO report is the manner in which the difficulties with EMIS are dismissed. The use of data earlier than 2002, when EMIS data had a better if not perfect level of accuracy, is extremely questionable. Particularly troubling are the identification trends displayed in the report which would indicate that H.B. 282 has increased gifted identification from 10% in 1999 to the current 13%. However, if one looks at the "official" state gifted count from past years it is clear that identification reached a high of almost **15%** in **1996**, three years prior to H.B. 282. (Please see attached exhibit). It dipped to **10.7%** in **2000**, during a time of immediate transition from green sheet data to EMIS. In this period of transition, district coordinators spent numerous hours attempting to reconcile local data with EMIS, a task that was plagued with system problems. In subsequent years, as districts and the ODE worked to make the EMIS gifted data count more accurate, the count increased to **13%**, still a full **2%** lower than the peak in **1996**. Unfortunately, LOEO staff was apparently unaware of the existence of official "green sheet" counts used by the department until

after the study was conducted and ready to be released. While LOEO needed to have a consistent source of data on which to base their analysis, past data from EMIS lacks the integrity needed to draw conclusions based on trend analyses. It is also important to note that variability in district gifted counts existed prior to the implementation of H.B. 282. Districts have been required to identify gifted students for over fifteen years. District child count figures in the years prior to the initial implementation of H.B. 282 ranged from **0%** to **46%**. The vast majority of districts identified between **4%** and **25%**.

- **Factors Affecting Variability** -- While LOEO identifies three of the factors for identification variability socio-economics, screening process, and teacher training, a number of critical questions remain unanswered:

    - In districts within the same demographic grouping, what accounts for the variability of identification?
    - Does the presence of districts gifted services offered relate directly to number of students identified?
    - Which assessment instruments tend to identify fewer gifted students relative to district demographic groupings?
    - What is the effect of district use of the composite achievement scores at the 95%ile in the superior cognitive category?
    - Why are some urban districts able to identify comparable levels of minority gifted students relative to the overall minority population in a district, while others are not? (More than 50% of children identified in Columbus Public Schools are minority students; over 40% are on free and reduced lunch. Columbus Public Schools identifies more than half of the gifted students in the large urban sub-group. There are eight districts in this sub-group.)
    - Are the reasons for variability in gifted identification numbers substantially different from the reasons for variability in the special education population? (Approximately 12 – 13 % of Ohio's student population is identified as needing special education services with district variability of 6 – 23%.)
    - Have the required audits conducted by ODE provided any information on the issue of variability?

    These are the questions that must be answered if Ohio policymakers are to make informed decisions regarding the state's gifted student population. Unfortunately, due to data issues and limited scope, this report is silent with respect to these questions.

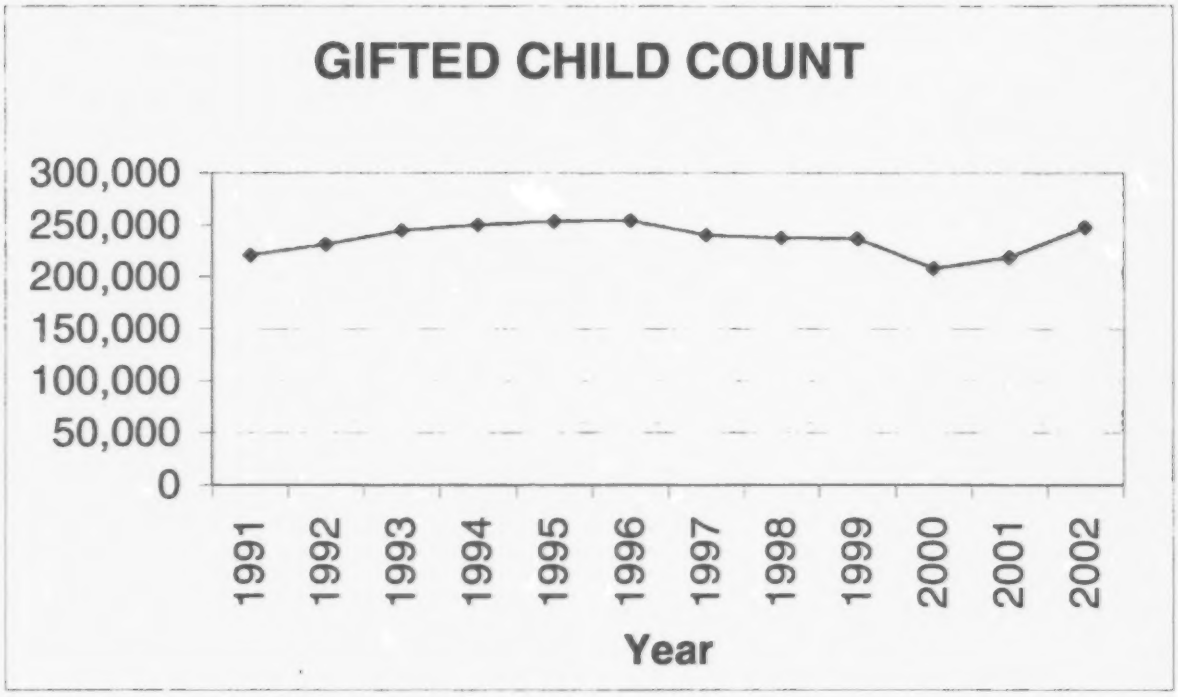
- **Characterization of District Flexibility** -- In characterizing Ohio's identification process, LOEO implies that other states offer more local control. Other than the fact that Ohio has a list of approved assessments, which is fairly extensive, districts exercise considerable local control. Districts are able to choose from a variety of assessments that best suit their student population. Districts also have considerable latitude on which students they test and when. The choices districts make directly impact the number of students identified. The assumption that outcomes will be standardized if identification is standardized overlooks the local control of each district not just in the identification

process but also the types of gifted services offered or even if services are offered. Districts that offer extensive programs attract families of gifted students and are more inclined to identify gifted students. As the LOEO study never looks at the relationship between services offered and the number of gifted students identified, it is impossible to know how important this factor is in the variability of students identified.

- **Policy Issue Regarding Funding** -- While the LOEO report rightly questions whether weighted funding is an appropriate mechanism for gifted funding, it may be for the wrong reasons. LOEO makes two assumptions in discussing policy decisions regarding funding. First, LOEO assumes that districts identifying large number of gifted students by default offer appropriate services via the regular curriculum. While there may, indeed, be more opportunities in wealthier districts for all students, research conducted using value-added assessment has shown that many high wealth districts do not provide academic growth to high ability students. Without specific accountability for the achievement gains of gifted students, districts often do not provide sufficient opportunities for their growth regardless of the wealth of the district. Secondly, LOEO assumes that a weighted funding system will provide substantially more funding to wealthy districts. Given equalization factors that provide little funding to high wealth districts, that is unlikely to happen. The real problem, based on research, is that smaller, poorer districts are unlikely to receive appropriate funding on a per pupil basis. This is due to the overall difficulty of small districts to cover fixed costs. This is also an issue with the current unit funding system, but one that is easily overcome by providing a minimal level of units to smaller districts. The Ohio Department of Education's (ODE) "Gifted in the 21st Century" report suggests a hybrid system using both units and equalized weights might be the most appropriate funding mechanism for gifted education. This recommendation and others from the 21st century report address identification, accountability, teacher preparation, policy development, and service.

The LOEO staff should be commended for their work on such a complex issue with limited data and scope. In order to capitalize on this initial work, ODE should perform additional research especially as the identification process stabilizes across districts in the next few years. OAGC would like to contribute to this effort by analyzing non-confidential data collected by LOEO in order to provide the gifted community with answers to questions beyond the scope of the LOEO study.

GIFTED CHILD COUNT TRENDS



Year	ID Count
1991	220,963
1992	231,474
1993	244,670
1994	250,154
1995	253,579
1996	254,368
1997	240,128
1998	237,564
1999	236,804
2000*	208,000
2001	219,000
2002	248,000

*In 2000, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) began to report the Gifted ID Count through EMIS. Prior to that time, the official count was reported directly to the Center for Exceptional Children at ODE in a hard copy format. Districts have reported great difficulty in reconciling the district Gifted ID count with the EMIS count reported for their district.

COCG

CONSORTIUM OF OHIO COORDINATORS FOR THE GIFTED

Providing Direction for Gifted Education

RESPONSE BY
THE CONSORTIUM OF COORDINATORS FOR GIFTED CHILDREN
TO
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE OF EDUCATION OVERSIGHT REPORT
IDENTIFICATION OF GIFTED STUDENTS IN OHIO

The Consortium of Ohio Coordinators for the Gifted appreciates the opportunity to comment on the work submitted by the LOEO staff. We refer to the work of the ODE Task Force, *Gifted in the 21st Century*, as a source of viable recommendations from the educational community regarding the very issues so aptly documented in the LOEO report. Following are what we perceive to be potential mitigating factors affecting the existing data and to improve data in the future.

Insights to past and future identification processes based on LOEO findings:

Regarding Gaps in the Referral Process

- Training to effectively identify needed.

Increased teacher training is necessary to improve referrals for the pool of students to be assessed, especially where full grade level assessment is not implemented. Pre-assessment and awareness of gifted characteristics will increase reliability of the referral process.

- Training to meet the needs of the gifted is needed.

Where service is not available, teachers and parents have no incentive to nominate students for assessment. Increased teacher training will allow students to receive at least a minimal amount of differentiated curricula within the regular classroom and increase the motivation to find students to serve in some way.

Regarding Gaps in Areas of Identification

- Special populations - More research is needed on best practice.

More work needs to be done to establish which assessment tools will best identify gifted students in different scenarios, including effectiveness for urban, rural, poverty, wealth, primary, secondary, etc. Determination is needed regarding advantages and disadvantages of each, based on the percentage of students identified with varying tools with diverse populations. Incentives for this research need to be provided.

- Visual and Performing Arts - Trained personnel in Visual and Performing Arts identification are needed.

Most gifted coordinators have little background in the specific nuances of arts identification. Concerted effort is being put forth to increase awareness in that area. Most service in the arts does not depend on formal identification, but on audition and class request. Increased service, especially in rural areas offering little or no service to children in this area, may prompt increased identification.

- Social Studies and Science - Appropriate social studies and science tests a challenge for early primary testing.

Districts may question the developmental appropriateness of that assessment for young children, affecting the percentage of students identified at that level.

- Social Studies and Science - Many districts administer basic battery tests not complete battery tests.

Within financial and time constraints, social studies and science may be omitted from district-wide testing. The basic battery gives information most districts need for math and reading placement. This may impact identification in these specific areas.

- Social Studies and Science - Service often revolves around math and reading.

Service motivates referrals and assessment. If service does not include social studies and science, the identification process will be impacted.

- Primary Under-identification - Individual intelligence test administered by qualified personnel cannot be used for gifted identification.

Many feel that group testing is a questionable practice for very young children. Individual intelligence tests, by law (ORC 3324.03), must be administered by licensed psychologists. The availability of these qualified personnel is limited due to lack of funding as well as the focus of their work being targeted toward the needs of special education. This change in the Rule makes it difficult for gifted coordinators to use more reliable assessments at an early age, and may reduce district willingness to identify young gifted children.

- Primary Under-identification- Some districts hesitate to identify students who excel in academic areas at a young age because of developmental and environmental factors.

Students who excel in a specific academic area may not be in the top 5 % once other children develop biologically, experientially and academically. Because the policy has

been "once identified, always identified", there may be a hesitancy to identify children who may not meet the criteria in a few short years.

- Creativity Under-identification - IQ tied to creativity may impact willingness to identify.

Currently a minimum IQ of 115 is necessary support the positive identification in the area of creativity in the law, ORC 3324.03. That, along with other philosophical and pragmatic issues, may dampen the willingness to identify until further research delineates best practice for identification.

Regarding Fluctuation Over Time

- Overall increase in identification has been positively affected by the "second chance" for assessment.

Important to consider over time, is the addition of the mandated second assessment for those students who were close to the cut-off criteria, but were not identified. In most districts in the past, only one test was given.

Regarding Fluctuation Among Districts

- Services offered in high socio-economic districts affect the number of gifted students who reside in the district. COCG agrees with the premise made by the authors of the LOEO report that service is a major factor in both the clientele and the demand for identification. Service draws families to districts where needs can be met.

- School of residence disadvantage now addressed. Loss of proficiency scores for LSES schools to magnet schools impeded referral and assessment.

In past years, the advanced scores on the proficiency followed the child to the building attended. Gifted children attending a magnet school would take their scores with them. This suppressed the number of students referred for testing. It may further account for past discrepancies between poor districts and wealthier districts where service may be more readily available at the home school.

Regarding Gaps In The Data Collection And Submittal Process

- Data collection is improving in districts as pointed out on page 10 of the report.

Gifted Coordinators are developing improved methods of processing and verifying the information submitted to the EMIS personnel and by the EMIS personnel to the state. Annual identification monies are absolutely necessary to ensure that this process is completed accurately.

- Identification numbers are actually fairly steady over time.

Fluctuation in identified students over 10 years is clearly due in large part to changes in data collection process.

We concur with the response submitted by OAGC in the reliability of the "green sheets" over early EMIS entries.

Data collection practices are still evolving and improving. The SE-095-G green sheets were a fairly simple and accurate count based on identification practices of that time. Given that data, the overall percentage of students identified as gifted has remained fairly steady, with clear explanations for increases in identification and continued gaps in the process.

Again, COCG applauds the work of the Legislative Office of Educational Oversight and appreciates the conclusions gleaned. We commend Shannon Lochtefeld and Stacy Cherry and the LOEO staff for their comprehensive efforts to shed light on a very complex process. As they have emphasized throughout the course of the work, it is not yet possible to determine the full impact of H.B. 282 on the identification practices in Ohio. We are optimistic for the future as gifted educators continue to work with districts and the Ohio Department of Education to annually improve our assessment, data collection and reporting processes and provide a higher quality of education for gifted children.

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LOEO's Response to Comments from the Ohio Association for Gifted Children (OAGC) and the Consortium of Ohio Coordinators for the Gifted (COCG)

It is the practice of the Legislative Commission of Education Oversight to include comments of agencies affected by LOEO studies in the final report. LOEO staff may add responses to agency comments to clarify specific issues. The following points are made in response to comments from the Ohio Association for Gifted Children (OAGC) and the Consortium of Ohio Coordinators for the Gifted (COCG).

LOEO appreciates the comments provided by OAGC and COCG. While we do not agree with all of their concerns, we recognize that these organizations are strongly committed to improving the educational opportunities and experiences of Ohio's gifted students.

The Ohio Association for Gifted Children (OAGC)

The Ohio Association for Gifted Children (OAGC) commented that LOEO never analyzed the effect of Am. Sub. H.B. 282 on gifted services. As seen on page two of the report, LOEO's legislative mandate for this study was clearly delineated and excluded an analysis of gifted *services*. The study focuses only on Ohio's gifted *identification* system.

Another concern raised by OAGC involved the integrity of the data LOEO used for the study. LOEO was fully aware of the existence of the "green sheets" used by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE). The green sheets were discussed with staff members of both OAGC and ODE throughout the course of the LOEO study. As was explained to OAGC, it is not true that ODE used the green sheets to determine the "official" gifted count. In fact, based on the gifted counts listed by ODE in its *Gifted Education Fact Sheet*, it is apparent that the EMIS data *were* the official count recognized by the department. Also, it would be misleading to use two different data sources to describe trends, as OAGC proposes.

OAGC raises the point that variability in district gifted counts occurred before the implementation of Am. Sub. H. B. 282. On page two of the report, LOEO notes that this has indeed been the case. In fact, this variability was one of the reasons LOEO was assigned the study by the General Assembly.

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As noted throughout the report, LOEO's exploration of the reasons behind this variability was guided by the hypothesis of 17 national, state, and regional experts in the field of gifted education. LOEO investigated all of the factors suggested by the experts and reported which ones were supported by the Ohio data and which were not.

OAGC also had some concerns about LOEO's findings regarding the degree of flexibility that school districts have in creating their gifted identification plans. As mentioned on page 2 of the report, LOEO acknowledges that school districts have a tremendous amount of control in creating their gifted identification plans. However, unlike other *states*, Ohio places more regulations on the criteria and methods that districts are permitted to use.

LOEO examined the type of assessments school districts used for screening and identification and attempted to determine the extent to which they might affect the percentage of students identified. As mentioned on page 28 of our study, because districts use a combination of assessments, it was not possible to determine what proportion of students is identified using a specific assessment. Therefore, it was not possible to conclude that the type of test used affects the percentage identified.

Regarding the policy issue discussed by LOEO, the OAGC states that LOEO makes two inaccurate assumptions: 1) that school districts with large numbers of gifted students are more likely to have a regular curriculum that meets their needs, and 2) that a weighted funding formula would provide wealthy districts with more funding. LOEO neither makes such statements nor assumes them to be true.

LOEO explains that because of Ohio's absolute standard of giftedness, a state mandate that requires services for "all students identified as gifted" could result in some school districts offering additional services to *all* of their gifted students, regardless of whether or not the regular curriculum offers them sufficient challenge. If, however, the mandate required services "to meet students' needs," it may be that only *some* students identified as gifted would need additional services.

LOEO goes on to point out that the funding implications for these two scenarios are very different, and that if the state decides to move to a weighted per-pupil funding system, serious consideration should first be given to determining which gifted students actually need services beyond those provided by their regular curriculum. While an examination of the actual curricula used by Ohio's school districts was not within the scope of this LOEO study, it remains an important factor to consider should the state decide to mandate services for gifted students.

The Consortium of Ohio Coordinators for the Gifted (COCG)

In its comments, the Consortium of Ohio Coordinators for the Gifted (COCG) stated that LOEO premised that service "is a major factor in both the clientele and the demand for identification" and that service "draws families to districts where needs can be met." As noted, LOEO's mandate excluded the examination of gifted services. Therefore, no conclusions were drawn regarding whether the provision of services affects identification.

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